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Daily Report

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FBIS-LAT-95-242 *18 December 1995*

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Further Reportage on Central American Summit Provisions of Security Treaty Noted

PA1512175495 Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish 13 Dec 95 p 12

[FBIS Translated Text] The ministers of foreign relations yesterday gave the finishing touches to the Central America Security Treaty that will be signed at the 17th Presidential Summit which opens today in San Pedro Sula.

With the exception of the Panamanian foreign minister, the remaining foreign ministers of the area discussed the plan that began to be reviewed by the deputy foreign ministers in Panama and yesterday continued in San Pedro Sula.

The treaty, the draft of which was already prepared, is based on democracy, the strengthening of its institutions, and the state of law. It focuses on human beings in their comprehensive vision of security and the sustainable development in Central America.

In addition, it deals with overcoming poverty and extreme poverty as threats to the security of residents and the democratic stability of Central American societies.

Reduction of Armies

The Central America Security Treaty does not speak about the reduction of military spending, but rather about adjusting the same in keeping with the internal and external situation of each state. For instance, in one of its articles, it states that the parties commit themselves to reach a reasonable balance of forces through negotiation. This will be done through a weapons restriction and control system and a possible program to adjust forces and military spending, taking into account the internal and external situation.

It establishes mechanisms such as the presidents meeting, the Foreign Relations Ministers Council, and the Security Commission, consisting of deputy ministers of foreign relations, defense, government or their equivalent. These deputy ministers have, in turn, the support of other sector or inter-sector councils.

Protection to Consumers

In the framework of the comprehensive vision of security and the development of Central America, the treaty includes provisions fostering trust among nations as well as provisions on legal matters, actions of public authorities, public security, overcoming poverty, corruption, drug trafficking, terrorism, organized crime, illegal gunrunning activities, and others.

In addition, it includes provisions on the protection of consumers, the environment, and cultural assets, as well as weapons restriction and control, advisers, bases, schools, and military installations.

In addition, it establishes a mechanism of information and communication for security, peaceful solution of controversies, verification and control, cooperation in case of human emergencies, threats and disasters, collective defense, handling of refugees and displaced population.

Costa Rica Supports Treaty

Leonel Paz Estrada, deputy foreign minister of Guatemala, affirmed that the legislative branch of each state must now ratify the treaty.

He indicated that a revision mechanism can also be established to see if the treaty is being observed.

Meanwhile, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando Naranjo stated he strongly supports the Security Treaty because it is an important step as part of the peace process, strengthening democracy, and respect for human rights in the region.

He remarked that the disarmament in the region will entail a great benefit for our peoples because with those resources we can spend more on education, health, and housing. He added this will improve the standards of living of the population.

Naranjo explained that his country has a more secure system that some countries in the Isthmus and spends less on security. Consequently, he asserted, the nation that spends most on security will not necessarily be safer.

He reiterated Costa Rica is strongly endorsing the treaty because it is an important step in the process of political transformation Central America has experienced in recent years.

Presidents Sign Accord on Car Theft

PA1512174195 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2339 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] San Pedro Sula, 14 Dec (NOTIMEX) — The presidents of Central America today signed a treaty that commits the governments to fight car theft, an offense that causes alarm among the nations of the area, diplomatic sources have said.

The signing of the accord took place during the framework of a visit made by the presidents to the Copan ruins, approximately 150 km west of San Pedro Sula, city where the 17th Central American Presidential Summit is being held since yesterday.

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The treaty commits governments to facilitate the return of vehicles stolen to the nation of origin.

Vehicles will be delivered to their owners in a 60-day term starting from the presentation of the registry certificate and the invoice, the document explained.

Sources said that the treaty ratification instruments will be placed at the Secretariat of Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), presided over by Honduran citizen Roberto Herrera Caceres.

The presidents will sign this Friday at the conclusion of the meeting a so-called Democratic Security Treaty, placing emphasis on the struggle against crime and acts against property in Central America.

The San Pedro Sula summit is being attended by Presidents Carlos Roberto Reina of Honduras, Ramiro De Leon Carpio of Guatemala, Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador, and Jose Maria Figueres of Costa Rica, as well as Belizean Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel.

Vice President Julia Mena is attending the summit on behalf of Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro, while Panama is represented by Vice President Tomas Gabriel Altamirano Duque.

Presidents on 'Satisfaction' With Treaty

PA1512173695 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0312 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] San Pedro Sula, Honduras, 13 Dec (ACAN- EFE) — The Central American presidents stated today their satisfaction, because they reached their first consensus on the Security Treaty. This treaty will be signed during the 17th Central American Summit, under way in this country.

As the first working day with his counterparts in the city of San Pedro Sula drew to an end, Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina stressed that "all of the presidents have achieved — which is not easy, because each country has its own problems — common criteria" regarding the document.

The Security Treaty will contain "concrete resolutions to benefit the Central American citizens," such as those designed to fight violence and crime in its different forms."

Reina confirmed that "we have not discussed anything about demilitarization, but there will be certainly points related to the region's Armed Forces."

He also cleared up that "we have not discussed a reduction (of troops)," but rather "what is the function of the armies within a democratic system."

The Honduran president emphasized that this country maintains "its civic position: the supremacy of the civilian power" over the military power, because "there cannot be any other type of democratic state."

Reina remarked that "no one has tried to reduce the size of the Honduran Army; the bureaucratic machinery in general is being reduced in keeping with the proportions that our economy can afford."

Salvadoran President Armando Calderon Sol stressed that the agreement includes the topics of legal, civic, and regional security.

In the meantime, Guatemalan President Ramiro De Leon Carpio said that, in addition to discussing the topics related to the Democratic Security Treaty, the reports by the technical commissions on the advances made by the Alliance for Sustainable Development, which is being promoted by the Central American governments, were discussed.

Concerning the topics of security, "there are still two points" on which we have not reached a final agreement, and "we are still discussing them," he noted.

However, he reiterated that, in general, "there is no disagreement, they are merely points we must still discuss. We have reached a consensus in all other aspects" of the rest of the document.

De Leon Carpio said that the initial obstacles that had emerged for the signing of the agreement have been overcome, because, "all the countries, including Costa Rica and Panama, have reached a consensus."

The two countries had objected the bill's military aspect, because they lack armies and they do not want to have anything to do with that issue.

The presidents will travel tomorrow, Thursday, to Copan, located in western Honduras, where they will tour the park and the archaeological museum, which stores significant riches of the ancient Mayan civilization.

'Text' of San Pedro Sula Declaration

PA1612022695 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 2030 GMT 15 Dec 95

["Text" of the Declaration of the 17th Central American Presidential Summit in San Pedro Sula; read by Honduran Foreign Minister Delmer Urbizo Panting]

[FBIS Translated Text] Declaration of San Pedro Sula. The presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras; the vice president of Nicaragua; the first vice president of Panama; and the ambassador of Belize to Central America acting as an observer, representing the prime minister of Belize, met from

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13 to 15 December 1995 in the city of San Pedro Sula, Republic of Honduras, on the occasion of the 17th Presidential Summit, to initiate the second stage of the Alliance for Sustainable Development [Alide], defined by the implementation of the priorities that we emphasized in our meeting in Costa del Sol, El Salvador, and to strengthen the implementation of the previously established guidelines with regard to said priorities by the establishment of a plan of action to that effect. Moreover, we have gathered to pay special attention to the issue regarding the protection of the people and their possessions, which we consider a necessary complement to achieve the success of Alide.

In our role as the Central American Council for Sustainable Development, we have determined that the priorities agreed upon in Costa del Sol, supplemented with the priorities of the 17th Presidential Summit, establish the foundation for ALIDE's plan of action for the next few years. They combine the nature of the works and the needs of our peoples. The reordering of priorities seeks to strengthen ALIDE and to keep it permanently current. A special effort will be required to get new resources that will complement regional resources for a prompt execution of the adopted priorities.

This implies opportune use of the contributions that the Central American states are making and will continue to make in this second stage of ALIDE, as well as those contributions that come from international cooperation.

The ALIDE plan of action, established in another document, deserved our approval, as well as the contents of issues of regional interest, whose follow-up will be carried out immediately.

Convinced that we are taking an important step in the consolidation of Central America as a region of peace, freedom, democracy, and development, in this meeting we have signed an agreement regarding a Central American legal system. This document reaffirms our steadfast commitment to democratic institutions and the rule of law. The sustainable development of Central America can only be achieved by the consolidation of a reliable legal system that will protect, regulate, and foster the rights of the residents of our nations.

Because we are equally convinced, we have signed a Central American treaty on the recovery and return of unduly and illegally stolen, seized, appropriated, or retained vehicles. It is an instrument that will facilitate and expedite the steps that must be taken to recover motor vehicles in any country of the region and will discourage this type of crime.

We stress that we are pleased with the marking of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, the existence of which has been essential for keeping peace, which has constituted a development force in this half century.

We also share the concerns that have prevailed in this anniversary, while we promoted a more democratic United Nations as far as its bodies are concerned. We want it to be more effective in the basic tasks of keeping peace and promoting the human development of all nations, according to the new world order.

As we sign this declaration, we want to make evident to Guatemalan President Ramiro De Leon Carpio our heart-felt recognition for his commitment to strengthen the state of law and his search for peace in that sister nation. Likewise, we [three-second break in reception] Central American nation, especially its leadership with the creation and consolidation of Alide, of which it was the main promoter. At the same time, we want to demonstrate our pleasure with the high civic spirit the Guatemalan people showed during the recent elections held in that country.

We express to the people and government of Honduras, as well as to the communities of San Pedro Sula and Copan Ruinas, our deep gratitude for the attention and support we received in our work. Likewise, we agree to hold the 18th Central American Presidential Summit in Managua, Nicaragua, in the first half of 1996.

Finally, we agree that this declaration should be called the San Pedro Sula Declaration.

San Pedro Sula, Cortez Department, Honduras on 15 December 1995.

Jose Maria Figueres Olsen, president of the Republic of Costa Rica [applause].

Armando Calderon Sol, president of the Republic of El Salvador [applause].

Ramiro De Leon Carpio, president of the Republic of Guatemala [applause].

Carlos Roberto Reina, president of the Republic of Honduras [applause].

Julia Mena Rivera, vice president of the Republic of Nicaragua [applause].

Tomas Gabriel Altamirano Duque, first vice president of the Republic of Panama [applause].

(Miguel Angel Mena), Belizean prime minister representative [applause].

Thank you.

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Presidents Hold News Conference

PA1612042495 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 2030 GMT 15 Dec 95

[News conference by Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina, Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio, Salvadoran President Armando Calderon Sol, and Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres with foreign correspondents and moderator Sifrido Pineda, at the Jerusalem Hall of the Honduran-Arab Center in San Pedro Sula, Honduras — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Pineda] Reporter Salvador Castellanos, representing all Salvadoran journalists, will ask the first question.

[Castellanos] Thank you, you are very kind. Good afternoon Messrs. Presidents and Representatives. President Figueres, my question is for you. I will move over here. Thank you. Could you please explain in detail what the reservations were in signing this document and why it did not have the consensus of all the participating countries.

[Figueres] Thank you. Good afternoon. First of all, I wish to express my gratitude for the warmth and friendliness [15-second break in reception] medium and long term, not only in our continent, but in the entire world. I am also sure that there is no similar agreement in any other region in the world. It highlights the state of law, democratic values, the peace we have consolidated in the region, the legal order under which we live in Central America, and the concern of the governments over citizens' security, a subject that worries all Central Americans.

The reservations Costa Rica has presented are due to the fact that we do not have an army. For many decades, this has made Costa Rica have a special foreign policy in that respect.

[Pineda] Thank you Mr. President of Costa Rica. The next question will be from Alvaro Galvez, representing the Guatemalan journalists.

[Galvez] Messrs Presidents. My question is for Ramiro de Leon Carpio. Could you please tell us or expand on the articles in which military bases, arms trafficking, and [words indistinct] aspects that were incorporated [words indistinct]?

[De Leon Carpio] With pleasure. First of all, the whereas or preamble, which embodies and contains the philosophy of a resolution or a decree before entering into the resolution, mentions the fact that during the past few years, as peace and democracy have been consolidated, Central American countries have made great advancements in achieving those objectives. Those advancements include the demobilization and reduction of troops and military budgets, the separation of police functions from those inherent in national defense, the elimination of military conscription or the implementation of voluntary service, and efforts and actions conducted to intensify the struggle against impunity, terrorism, etc. The next point in the preamble says that the Central American model of democratic security is based on the supremacy and strengthening of civilian power, the reasonable balance of forces, the security of individuals and their properties, the elimination of poverty, etc. It also says that the Central American model of democratic security will increasingly use its resources in social investments. This clearly indicates where those resources must go from now on.

To answer your question, specifically, the resolution states: the reasonable balance and corresponding adjustment of military forces and budgets will take into consideration the guidelines established in the Constitution... [interference by station announcer's comments] the numbering changed. It now reads: the reasonable balance and corresponding adjustment of military forces and budgets will take into consideration the guidelines established in the constitution of each one of the parties and their defense needs, based on factors such as relevant geographic and border conditions and the presence of foreign forces or military advisers, among others. The parties commit themselves to abstain from acquiring, maintaining, or permitting the stationing or transit through their territories of indiscriminate mass destruction weapons, etc.

Article 1 reads that the Central American democratic security model establishes that the creation of a reasonable balance of forces will take into account each state's internal situation and the cooperation needs of all Central American countries to guarantee their security. In this regard, we see a clear response in the democratic security framework agreement, in the regional security chapter dealing with the readjustment, reduction, and the balance of the military forces of each country.

[Pineda] Thank you very much to the Guatemalan president for his response. We will now focus our attention on the representative of the group of Costa Rican journalists, Mauricio Herrera.

[Herrera] Mr. President Figueres, what consequences will the reservations the Costa Rican and Panamanian Governments broached in this presidential summit have on the Central American integration process?

[Figueres] It seems to me that none whatsoever, in a negative sense. I believe that here we have made a big effort to update and define in a more tangible and modern fashion the concept of security in regional terms

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to ensure that we will incorporate into it such elements as the state of law; the legislative framework, under which we, Central Americans, go about in each one of our countries; and the concepts of civic security. I also think that we have reached corollary agreements that put into practice significant parts of this treaty. Such is the case of the stolen vehicles that have been shipped from one country to another; such is the case of a draft agreement on which we are already working to share information that will make us much more effective in the fight against drug trafficking, which is another of the elements, we, the presidents, have discussed. So, it seems to us that all these issues will reinforce the Central American integration process thanks to this new and modern definition of the democratic security elements.

[Pineda] Thank, Mr. Jose Maria Figueres, president of Costa Rica. Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio will add something to his statement.

[De Leon Carpio] Thanks. In my answer to the previous question asked by our journalist friend from PRENSA LIBRE, I overlooked Article 32, which has a bearing on part of the answer. The article says: The sides pledge to continue making efforts to limit and control arms through a reasonable balance of forces according to the internal and external situation of every state. I am taking the opportunity to say that the text is virtually the same that has been made public in its original form, only split into titles and chapters and separating juridical security. First, the state of law. Second, security of people and their properties, regional security, which includes the military. And finally, security through institutions, that is to say [words indistinct].

[Pineda] We thank the two distinguished presidents of Costa Rica and Guatemala for sharing this answer. As the final part of this news conference, we give the floor, in the name of Honduran reporters, to Roberto Portillo, a reporter from San Pedro Sula, the city that has welcomed us so warmly and has hosted these distinguished visitors for three days. Roberto Portillo, please.

[Portillo] Mr. President, I have a list of questions I have shared with some Honduran colleagues. By consensus, I have the questions here in this paper. I will mention the most important ones. They want to know whether what has been signed in this document, particularly regarding the safety of people and their properties, will be enforced. It could happen that, when the next summit meeting draws close, the insecurity aspect, which has increased markedly, particularly in San Pedro Sula, will have been overlooked. All of this is very familiar to our president. We have another question about electric interconnection, which is a social problem. Will this interconnection serve to raise or lower the rates or simply to standardize them? We want to know whether they are [words indistinct]

[Rei[illegible]] Thanks to Portillo for asking these questions in Honduran dialect. With this language, we all can feel more at home. As for your first question, whether the document will be enforced, it sort of plants the doubt as to the presidents' intention to comply. We have to explain this. No security treaty can guarantee 100 percent that there will be no violence. It is impossible to guarantee this. We have seen what happens in Spain, where there have been horrible attacks, despite the presence of the best police in the world.

We have also seen how His Holiness or the U.S. President have suffered attacks although they have the best security in the world. With the understanding that the presidents have committed our honor and our enthusiasm and are complying with the mandate we have received from our people, I can say that all the presidents are convinced [3-second break in reception] will seek by all means security for common citizens, for all those who work, practice a profession, or live in our countries. I am sure there will be much more tranquility with an international effort of this nature. If crime and vices are being internationalized, the defense of the state of law must also be internationalized. That is the idea. We ask the media to transmit optimism to our people. There will be no advancement in our countries if as a result of underdevelopment, we sow doubts, indifference, and apathy. Regarding the treaty for electric power interconnection, which is a new [word indistinct] it has to do with the energy situation in Honduras. The year 1994 was catastrophic; we had rationing, which reduced Honduran production to 50 percent. There has been no more rationing this year, 1995. On the contrary, we are selling energy, to Costa Rica, for example. There are other countries, like Ecuador — an oil-producing country, a rich country — which has problems in this area.

What I would like to say or explain is that during the phase when we had to replace the energy obtained from El Cajon Dam for energy from imported fuel, we have had to adjust payments. This phase is almost over. We are sure that the National Enterprise for Electric Power committed mistakes in its system, and it did not have enough tact to explain its situation to each one of its clients. There has been much criticism, but the truth is that we have improved. We have overcome the energy crisis, and we are heading toward better days.

Today, we want to interconnect Central America by implementing projects to produce energy that will cost

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much less. A difference of one cent per kilowatt represented $150 million per year. This will be reduced. We have obtained financial assistance, and we hope this will help Central American countries improve their living conditions and increase their production. The interconnection in Central America is a substantial advancement. The Spanish prime minister, who is also EU president at this time, has conveyed — I took the liberty of [word indistinct] in my speech his total support for this interconnection project, which will enable us to improve the living conditions of the Honduran people and of Central America in general.

[Pineda] The same question was directed to the Salvadoran president.

[Calderon Sol] Thank you. I would like to add a few words and say that Central American presidents are clearly determined to fight crime, to face this social scourge currently afflicting the entire region. We have come here to San Pedro Sula interpreting the will of the Central American people to sign this treaty on democratic security. We want to generate more security in the [word indistinct] life of Central American people and their [words indistinct]. That is why the treaty on democratic security carries, as the president was saying, three clear factors: juridical security, which we must have for investment, development, to fight poverty, and to guarantee the institutionality of our democracies; the security of individuals and properties, to fight crime; and regional community, which is and will be [words indistinct] so that the region can live in real tranquility and peace.

This is what has brought us here. That is what we are willing to offer and give the Central American people. The security which with the work of all will become more efficient because of the coordination that will exist between the states — the exchange of information, the availability of registers — that is, all the cooperation that you will see stipulated in the agreement to be signed.

The same applies to the electric power linkage. I believe the electric power interconnection is a dream of the Central American people. [words indistinct] different states to sell, or purchase, according to our needs. If, at a given moment, El Salvador has an energy shortage, and Honduras has an energy surplus, then El Salvador, Costa Rica, or Guatemala could sell this excess so that we can take full advantage of our water resources, our geothermal resources, and also be able to produce thermal energy. To be able to exchange, sell, or trade energy, it is necessary that we be united and have [words indistinct] of exchange. That is why this energy interconnection is so important, because it can help us at any given moment, whether it be due to energy problems or shared momentary problems, such as those we experienced in the past due to the [word indistinct] that we experienced. These are the advances that we are making in Central America and which are uniting us more every day. This is what [words indistinct] to see a Central America more united, more integrated each day.

[Pineda] Thank you very much, Mr. Salvadoran President. Thus we end this news conference, which at the same time, is the closure of the 17th Central American and Belize Presidential Summit. We thank these high-ranking dignitaries who have taken part in this news conference.

Presidents Discuss Summit

PA1612174195

[FBIS Editorial Report] Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish at 2127 GMT on 15 December, following a news conference given by the presidents of Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica at Jerusalem Hall in the Honduran-Arab Center in San Pedro Sula, broadcasts an informal question-and-answer session with several of the Central American presidents with unidentified reporters and comments by station announcers.

Salvadoran President Armando Calderon Sol is asked whether he is pleased with the summit. The president replies: "Yes, very happy and pleased. I think that this summit in San Pedro Sula was a historic step for Central American integration. It was very fruitful." As for a reduction in army size, Calderon Sol says: "No one opposes a reduction in army size. I think that my country has already overcome this. In my country we have considerably reduced the size of the army as a result of the peace agreements. The world already knows about them."

Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina is questioned about the reservations voiced by Costa Rica about certain articles of the security treaty for Central America. He answers that "it is very logical for Costa Rica, as President Figueres explained, to voice some reservations. It is a very special country in which there is no army, and thus, it cannot deal with this issue without changing Costa Rica's traditional position."

A station announcer then says that Costa Rica and Panama have voiced reservations to certain articles of the security treaty for Central America. He reads points A, B, and C of Article 27: "A. To establish a preventive mechanism to give early alert in cases of security threats of any kind and a permanent program to bolster trust among the states of the Central American region. B. To continue efforts to establish a reasonable balance

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of military and public security forces in keeping with the internal and foreign situation of each state. C. To establish a Central American security information and communication mechanism." The announcer notes that this confirms that Costa Rica and Panama wanted a reduction in army size, but this was opposed, especially by the Honduran Government.

Another announcer introduces a recording of Honduran Foreign Minister Delmer Urbizo explaining why Costa Rica and Panama have voiced reservations. Urbizo notes that "Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres Olsen during a news conference here said that Costa Rica and Panama have no armies, but only police forces, and thus, Costa Rica and Panama did not need to sign provisions contained in the chapter on regional security dealing with armies and armed forces. They signed everything else dealing with the basic treaty on Central American democratic security. This position was expected. They, due to a very special situation, cannot deal with military issues in the area."

An announcer notes that the Honduran Constitution states that only Congress can order a reduction in the size of the armed forces. In response, Urbizo states that "each state is sovereign. We dealt with the balance of forces in Central America. The reduction issue is out because that falls under the jurisdiction of each country."

An announcer notes: "Costa Rica and Panama did not oppose the continued existence of armies. They did not sign the portion dealing with armies, because they only have security forces."

Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio is then asked his impressions about this summit. He points out that "we are very pleased. We came to sign viable and attainable agreements and that is just what we did. I think this was a great step. I think that the San Pedro Sula summit will be historic, because it marked a new phase in Central America. We did not discuss politics or peace, because that is in the past, except for my country where there is still a confrontation. There is complete political stability in the area. And perhaps this is our problem, because we are no longer a problem for the major powers. We are no longer a problem for those who viewed us as such and helped us. We must now help ourselves."

De Leon is asked whether there is resistance to a reduction in army size and why the document used terms such as balance of forces among the countries instead. The president says that this is an incorrect assessment. He notes that "Guatemala has already started a reduction. I demobilized the military commissioners; this involves about 27,000 persons. The Civilian Self-Defense Patrols will be demobilized as soon as the peace treaty is signed."

The president adds that "today we have two challenges before us. One is the security of our peoples and the other one is the economic aspect, the struggle against poverty and extreme poverty. This can be achieved in two ways and both are indispensable. One is to obtain resources, and this can only be achieved by fighting fiscal evasion and collecting more from those who earn more in keeping with our laws. The second element is to invest this money honestly. If this is achieved, Central America could achieve greater stability not only in the political area, which was already attained, but also economic and social stability."

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Cuba

Official: UN Draft on Human Rights 'Fraudulent'

PA1512141895 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0113 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 13 Dec (PL) — Cuba described a draft resolution on their human rights situation, that was imposed by the United States at the meeting of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, as a continuous fraudulent exercise.

Cuban Representative Jose Antonio Fernandez said today during discussion on this issue within this body, which deals with social, humanitarian, and cultural affairs, that this U.S. imposition is an inseparable part of the hostile policy of successive U.S. administrations against the Cuban people.

"Cuba has nothing to be ashamed of because it has a clean background in the human rights sphere," Fernandez emphasized as he explained his vote against this draft.

He added that his country had not only established a legal system and institutions to guarantee this right to its citizens, but that it had also significantly supported the most noble and just causes on the UN agenda for the past three decades.

"If we are talking about cooperation with the UN system, we have been an example of clarity, honesty and goodwill," Fernandez pointed out.

He wondered who in the world could give credibility and legitimacy to the goals of a draft resolution on human rights in Cuba presented by a government that has denied the island's inhabitants access to food and medicine.

Fernandez noted that Cuba feels neither accused nor tried, and he added that political pressure may prevent the free exercise of vote at the United Nations, but it will not prevent the truth from being exposed and shared.

The Cuban diplomat pointed out that "in fact, it was co-sponsored only by the United States, some of its allies, and a few countries forced to support it because of the circumstances."

In this regard, Fernandez wondered what the reasons were for the delegation of Uzbekistan to support the U.S. blockade against Cuba and to co-sponsor this draft resolution, although he pointed out that every delegate knows the answer to this question.

He added that his country will continue its historic project of independence and national dignity and the process of transformation based on popular consensus. It will also continue to maintain permanent cooperation with the United Nations guided by the principles of universality, impartiality, and nonselectivity for human rights everywhere in the world.

Fernandez said, "Cuba will never accept this selective, discriminatory, and unjust exercise. It will never accept this clumsy draft, regardless of how much it is revised, and it will never accept a special rapporteur, regardless of how much he is disguised as neutral and independent."

The vote for the draft was 62-23-73.

Further Reportage on Castro's Visit to PRC, SRV

Castro Returns to Havana 15 Dec

PA1512194295 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1523 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 15 Dec (PL) — President Fidel Castro arrived in this capital city today. He was coming from Vancouver, Canada, the last technical stopover on his return flight to the country after concluding official visits to the PRC and Vietnam.

The Cuban leader was received at the Havana airport by Raul Castro, second secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and Revolutionary Armed Forces minister, as well as by other officials.

During his return trip from Vietnam, the head of state made a 48-hour stopover in Tokyo, where he met with Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama and Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, among others.

Sends Letter to SRV Communist Leader

PA1712145895 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2137 GMT 16 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hanoi, 16 Dec (PL)— PRENSA LATINA prints President Fidel Castro's message to Do Muoi, secretary general of the SRV Communist Party upon the end of his visit on 12 December.

Dear Comrade Do Muoi:

I leave SRV with more affection and admiration for this country than before. I marvel at your efforts and progress. The challenge before you is overwhelming, but I have no doubts in my mind that you will overcome it. I congratulate all the Vietnamese people for not engaging in dogmatism and for their boldness and courage. Capitalism is a calamity and the cause of all present evils. I depart from your country more confident in socialism and the role of the party, which is the only one capable of imparting sanity and order in the prevalent international chaos surrounding us.

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Allow me to deeply thank you for all the attentions the Cuban delegation and I received, in particular for your sincere and noble expressions to me.

I expect you in Cuba, as soon as it will be possible for you, in order to express all our affection and appreciation. "Forward heroic Vietnam." Victory awaits you once again.

Yours truly,

[Signed] Fidel Castro Ruz

Ho Chi Minh City,

12 December 1995.

'Straight Talk' Program on Asian Tour

PA1712152695

[FBIS Editorial Report] Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish at 1700 GMT on 13 December broadcasts the "Straight Talk" program with its guest journalist Eddie Jimenez and program host Osvaldo Rodriguez. The topic of the program is President Fidel Castro's Asian tour.

Rodriguez starts off by saying that before air time international news agencies reported that Castro met with the Japanese prime minister.

Jimenez goes on to assess Castro's Vietnam visit. He states that it was very important from an economic standpoint, because an agreement to sell 100,000 tonnes of rice to Cuba was signed. Jimenez adds, however, that more important than that is the fact that it was a meeting between friends. Jimenez recalls that Castro was the only head of state who visited the liberated areas of south Vietnam and that Vietnam has supported Cuba through all these difficult years, and vice versa, and this cannot be easily forgotten.

Rodriguez says that Castro's visit to Vietnam was very touching, because the Vietnamese, contrary to the Chinese, not only showed off their progress, but also the sites that Castro had been during his very first visit.

Jimenez points out that Vietnam is among the countries experiencing accelerated economic growth, although it is not yet a China or Korea. He recalls that Vietnam also suffered a U.S. blockade, but with major advantages over Cuba: It is far from the United States and has received Japanese, German, and French capital. Jimenez adds that the "United States is willing to accept socialism in the Asian Continent, but not in Latin America, much less 90 miles away from it." Rodriguez concurs and notes that this is the true reason for the hostility against Cuba.

Jimenez and Rodriguez comment on other differences between Cuba and Vietnam, including the fact that the latter has a large rural population, 80 percent compared to Cuba's 20 percent, and this makes it easier for that country to solve its food problems. Jimenez states that Vietnam just came out of a war, and thus, its population notices any improvement. He adds that Cuba's situation is quite different, because the revolution improved the Cuban people's standard of living, which was even higher than that of other Latin American countries, "but the special period spoiled the privileged economic situation we had achieved, but only the economic achievements, because we have not lost all our social achievements, which are still much better than many Latin American countries."

Rodriguez notes that "perhaps lack of information led us to think at certain times that China and Vietnam had abandoned the socialist line and had embraced the market system, although they continued to mention socialism by name. Now that we have gotten closer to these two countries, we confirm that they are indeed practicing socialism, but have included a number of market mechanisms. As we discussed with our colleague Julio Garcia recently on this program, the market is not tantamount to capitalism, although one must include certain rules imposed by capitalism when dealing with markets."

Jimenez says that one thing that theoreticians must do is to "redefine the meaning of socialist government. We once discussed here that there are no longer... [pauses] that patterns can no longer exist, because they were broken for better and for worse."

Rodriguez notes that not even Marx wanted to establish patterns. Jimenez adds that "a model called socialism was established, and it was said that to be a socialist one had to do this and that, to copy this design or that, but this pattern was broken. The measures that we have adopted could be called socialist in keeping with our reality. Perhaps they are not the same ones that Vietnam needed or might not be the same ones that a developing country embracing socialism at this time needs."

Jimenez argues that there is socialism as long as the social and economic benefits are channeled to the people. He stresses that the means of production are basically in the hands of the people in Cuba. Rodriguez asks whether a strong and growing private sector could challenge the state for power. Jimenez says that this a risk worth taking. He adds that this sector must pay taxes and the state should use those profits to benefit the people.

Jimenez adds that "if we isolate ourselves now, the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions could be spoiled."

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He says that the state has never renounced maintaining control over society. Rodriguez and Jimenez concur that Cuba cannot afford to jeopardize its future out of fear of facing problems at present, because there will always be problems.

Radio Titan To Begin Hour-Long Broadcasts 23 Dec

PA1512215095 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "Doing Radio" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Now our relay with Santiago de Cuba Province and correspondent Carlos Sanabria Marrero.

[Begin recording] [Sanabria] On 23 December, Radio Titan will become Cuba's 59th radio station. It is located in Julio Antonio Mella Municipality. I ask Jorge Luis Betancourt, station director, why name it Radio Titan?

[Betancourt] Radio Titan is our station's name because we are situated in the historic area where the Varagua protest took place. We have chosen this name to honor Antonio Maceo and we are very proud to bear this name.

[Sanabria] How long will your broadcasts be?

[Betancourt] To begin with, one hour. Later, and depending on programing adjustments, we will broadcast for three hours.

[Sanabria] What type of programs?

[Betancourt] Mainly informative and special information [facilitacion especial] for all the inhabitants of this northern area of Santiago de Cuba Province.

[Sanabria] What type of equipment does Radio Titan have?

[Betancourt] Right now, in line [en linea]. We have some equipment that we have repaired. It is semiprofessional, it is not professional equipment. However, it makes our start-off possible. Later, and according to broadcast needs — or as we win the right — we hope to have other equipment, more in-line with today's radio technology.

[Sanabria] How many workers will the new radio station have?

[Betancourt] There will be seven comrades, that is the minimum staff needed — initially — for 1996. We can guarantee our broadcasts with this staff.

[Sanabria] In the sugarcane producing Julio Antonio Mella Municipality this morning, I have been speaking with Jorge Luis Betancourt, director of the a new Cuban radio station, Radio Titan. The station will be inaugurated on 23 December, on occasion of the provincial radio festival, which will take place here in Santiago de Cuba.

Journalists, Technicians Receive Radio Award

PA1612192295 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 14 Dec 95

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Technicians and specialists at the Cuban Radio and Communications Ministry received the technical merit award due to their relevant contributions to the development of Cuban radio. Radio pioneers and young professionals who helped with their efforts to broadcast radio signals nationwide attended a ceremony, during which comrades from Pinar del Rio, Havana, Havana province, and Matanzas were awarded.

(Josefa Brasero), vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television [ICRT], went back in history and recalled that the transmitter power in Cuba was inferior to the current power of the Radio Progreso station at the time of the triumph of the revolution.

Currently, there are 58 radio stations in Cuba, thanks in great part to the excellent work accomplished by the people who attended this ceremony. The technical merit plaque will be awarded to those who made the rebel radio [radio guerrillera] possible during a third and last ceremony to be held in Granma province.

Roundup of Politburo Members' Activities Through 15 Dec

PA1512142495

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on the activities of Cuban Communist Party Central Committee Politburo members monitored through 15 December.

Abel Prieto Jimenez said, during the second session of the First Meeting of the Youth: Participation, Integration, and Identity International Convention in Havana, that Cuba's economic problems have not affected its wealth of high level creative minds. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 8 Dec 95)

Nelson Torres Perez visited Holguin Province to inspect sugar mills where he told Holguin workers that efficiency has to be at the core of revolutionary work if they are to meet the sugar production quota assigned to them. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 9 Dec 95)

Nelson Torres Perez headed a minister's commission visiting Ciego de Avila Province to inspect preparations

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for the sugar harvest in the province. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 12 Dec 95)

Osmany Cienfuegos Gorriaran attended the inauguration of a new international airport at Cayo Largo del Sur, Cuba. (Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 9 Dec 95)

Juan Almeida Bosque today received new Burkina Faso Ambassador to Cuba (Shalif Nevee) who presented his credentials. (Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 9 Dec 95)

Alfredo Jordan Morales told agricultural workers in Pinar del Rio that 17 brigades will revitalize rice production in Cuba. (Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 9 Dec 95)

Candido Palmero Hernandez visited Havana Province where he met with vegetable producers. Palmero told producers they should lower their prices and increase vegetable production for next year. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 11 Dec 95)

Carlos Lage Davila visited Matanzas Province where he told the media that all the resources are available to guarantee a good sugar harvest. Lage added that sugar still captures more currency that tourism, but tourism has greater potential. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 12 Dec 95)

Pedro Ross Leal took part in a meeting yesterday in Havana with members of two brigades of voluntary sugarcane cutters. Ross spoke about the goal of the sugar harvest under way and the men and women who are responsible for increasing sugar production. (Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 13 Dec 95)

Roundup of Sugarcane Developments Through 17 Dec

PA1812031595

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on sugarcane and sugar industry developments in Cuba monitored through 17 December.

The sugarcane cuttings at the Jose Rene Riquelme Agricultural and Industrial Complex in Quemado de Guines municipality, in Villa Clara Province, will start on 12 December. Later that week, sugar production will start in a province that is, historically speaking, the largest producer of the sweetener in Cuba. Some eight machete-wielding brigades, five of which are formed by peasants, and 13 sugar combines participate in the sugarcane cuttings. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 11 Dec 95)

Pinar del Rio Province will soon employ more than 100,000 men and women in the sugarcane harvest. Most of them are already at the camps, and the others will get there in the next few days. This amount is one seventh of the territory's total population. Pinar del Rio is considered the province that mobilizes the most people as several products are harvested at the same time. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 16 Dec 95)

Haiti

Reportage on 17 Dec Presidential Elections

Aristide: Preval 'Favorite Candidate'

PA1512181395 Paris AFP in Spanish 1723 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Port-au-Prince, 15 Dec (AFP) — Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide has pronounced himself publicly and for the first time in favor of his former prime minister, Rene Preval, as his favorite candidate in the Haitian presidential elections to be held on 17 December.

"I am going to vote for candidate Rene Preval," the Haitian president announced upon leaving a ceremony to inaugurate a bridge in Jacmel (130 km to the southeast of the capital city) where he gave a speech in Creole.

With this public statement, 36 hours before the elections, the Haitian president ended a series of ambiguities caused by the backing, up to now implicit and discreet, given to Preval.

His preference, which Haitian radio stations broadcast to the entire country, should guarantee a broad victory for Preval.

Preval: 'Credible' Government Needed

PA1512215995 Paris AFP in Spanish 1919 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Port-au-Prince, 15 Dec (AFP) — Former Haitian Prime Minister Rene Preval, the favorite in Sunday's presidential election in Haiti, said today during an interview granted to AFP in Port-au-Prince that his country needs "an honest and credible government."

Preval denied rumors about differences between he and outgoing President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Hours after the interview Aristide for the first time supported Preval publicly. Preval is considered as the front-runner in the presidential election.

Only 36 hours before the elections, Aristide thus ended the ambiguity provoked by his — until now implicit and prudent — support for Preval's candidacy.

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"There is a need to restore trust, work with honesty, and create security conditions and space for private capital and foreign investments," Preval stated.

"Now is the time to stop thinking about aid and start thinking in terms of investments to ensure that we will need them increasingly less," the candidate who represents the government Lavalas coalition said.

"We must assume our responsibility to bring about growth to a dying economy" through a "major action," Preval added.

As for the insecurity problem, the former Prime Minister Preval (1991-93) said that "both the bourgeoisie and the people are frightened."

"There is the immediate personal insecurity and (...) the insecurity of injustice and destitution, that of a father who will not be able to feed his children," Preval said. He underscored "the abyss that exists between the worries of Haitians."

The candidate criticized the way in which the international community dealt with the country's disarmament, and he noted that it "should have disarmed the terrorists who oppose peace."

"If that is not done now, more than a year after the international intervention (...) there could be some questions left up in the air," he said.

With respect to the privatization of state enterprises, Preval stipulated that "we intend to do whatever is necessary for the Haitian people without surrendering to ultraliberal pressures or to pressures to nationalize."

"We are in need of $7 million to make the Haiti flour mill, and $13 million to make the state cement factory begin operating again. Would it not be preferable to seek private capital instead of utilizing state funds that could be used for other things?" he asked.

After stressing that he is a "personal and political friend" of President Aristide, Preval indicated that the outgoing president "is a man whom I respect very much because he has a profound awareness of the Haitian people's interests."

"There are no differences whatsoever between us, except that I am part of a campaign (electoral) and it is very difficult to speak to him or see him," Preval highlighted when Aristide's preference had still not been made public.

As a friend, as an adviser, I will continue requesting his opinion and he will continue to fulfill a great role in the establishment and consolidation of democracy in Haiti," Preval added.

When asked about the likelihood of extending the presence of UN troops in Haiti, Preval was cautious and pointed out that: "If it is essential for the people's benefit, we will adopt whatever measures may be necessary for this."

Aristide To Vote for Preval

PA1512220095 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 2000 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From "the Waking Up Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rene Preval, the candidate for the Lavalas party, this Friday canceled meetings scheduled for this afternoon in Port-au-Prince for health reasons. Rene Preval is suffering from the flu, according to his entourage. Security reasons linked to the fear of extremists hostile to the elections have also justified this decision, according to the same source.

It should be pointed out that the electoral campaign will end tonight in Haiti. It should be recalled as well that President Aristide publicly took a stand this morning in favor of his former prime minister. I am going to vote for Lavalas political platform candidate Rene Preval, the president announced in a speech delivered during the inauguration of a bridge in Jacmel.

Aristide Criticizes International Community

PA1512221595 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "Waking Up" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Jean-Bertrand Aristide will be in the southeast today, or more especially in Jacmel for the inauguration of a bridge in this region. The president will take the opportunity to give his opinion on the elections and take an official stand toward Lavalas political platform candidate Rene Preval. The president announced yesterday that he wanted to remain in communion with the Haitian people so he can be the voice of those who cannot speak in order to defend their rights after his departure from power on 7 February 1996.

I will be very happy to be home. I will have time to read, to write, and — certainly — to commune with the Haitian people so I can be the voice of those who cannot speak to defend their rights, and this communion is going to crystallize my faithfulness toward my people, stated Mr. Aristide, who was speaking during a meeting with the foreign press at the National Palace.

I believe that we will have elections in peace and nonviolence, asserted the president, who refused to speak openly in favor of Rene Preval, his former prime

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minister and favorite in the presidential elections of 17 December. We have good relations, he just pointed out.

On the other hand, he expressed severe criticism against the international community concerning disarmament in the country. They could have done better as far as disarmament is concerned, without risking the lives of the soldiers, the president said, pointing out that his future and that of his country are linked to disarmament.

The president of the Republic also said that the Haitians did not see the results of international aid, pointing notably to the slowness of the work at a peripheral boulevard in the lower part of the capital, that is in Carrefour.

Finally, concerning the documents which will be handed over to the Haitian Government seized by the American troops in 1994 at the Army headquarters and on the premises of the Revolutionary Front for the Promotion and Progress of Haiti [FRAPH], which was supported by the military regime, the president said: These documents belong to us, and we are waiting for them to be returned the same way they were taken. This is an allusion to the fact that U.S. authorities want to erase the names of U.S. citizens who are supposedly mentioned in it.

Aristide Partisans: 3 Years 'Non-Negotiable'

PA1612013895 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "Waking Up" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Effigies of the president of the Republic have been put on the walls of the capital two days before the organization of the forthcoming presidential elections. Partisans of the head of state yesterday launched a vast campaign aimed at demanding an extension of his mandate by posting Aristide's pictures and their demands on the walls of the capitol. At the bottom of the pictures, placed near those of Lavalas Political Organization [OPL] candidate, Rene Preval, one could read, and I quote: The people's three years are non-negotiable. Similar notices appeared on walls in the Petion-Ville area on 13 December. [passage omitted]

Confrontations Over Mandate Extension

PA1612013995 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "Waking Up" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] There were confrontations between partisans and adversaries of the extension of the mandate of the Haitian president after his visit to the Carrefour area yesterday. Partisans and opponents of the extension of Aristide's mandate pelted each other with stones yesterday for more than an hour in Bizoton 49, a Signal FM reporter noted. Car windshields were broken and several persons were injured during these incidents.

Survey: Preval Winning With Big Lead

PA1612230795 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1543 GMT 16 Dec 95

[By Elias Garcia]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Port-au-Prince, 16 Dec (EFE) — The latest survey published before tomorrow's presidential elections show Rene Preval of Lavalas will obtain an overwhelming majority in the first round.

The survey, commissioned by Radio Metropole and LE NOUVELLISTE newspaper, was conducted with a sample of 800 persons, indicated that Prevail would garner 64.49 percent of the votes.

The candidate to follow with the most votes, over 15 percent, was independent Leon Jeune, a cousin of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and former justice minister, who was tasked with reorganizing the police following Aristide's return after three years of exile imposed by the 1991 military coup.

According to the survey, Julio Larosiliere would come in third. During the era of Jean-Claude Duvalier he served as a deputy and participated in the Constituent Assembly that met in 1987 after Duvalier went into exile.

In September 1991, he supported the coup by General Raoul Cedras and was one of Cedras' main supporters in the Senate from which he boycotted the talks with Aristide. When he ultimately decided to support the constitutional president, he went into exile until the 1994 U.S. invasion. Victor Benoit, the candidate of the Konakom [National Congress of Democratic Movements], the only opposition party to participate in the elections, would receive approximately 4.5 percent of the votes. Surprisingly, judging by the estimates of international observers currently in Haiti, the abstention rate will be moderate, since the survey stated it would be approximately 25 percent. [passage omitted]

Citizens Vote Amid Calm, Low Turnout

PA1712185595 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1702 GMT 17 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Port-au-Prince, 17 Dec (NOTIMEX) — Haitians started to vote this morning amid a tranquil atmosphere in the first round of the elections to choose a successor to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, electoral authorities confirmed today.

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Polling stations opened at 0600 local time for the first electoral round in which 3.6 million registered Haitians may cast votes.

A U.S. official who visited the polling tables said that everything indicates that it will be a peaceful and fair process, but the turnout will be low.

At a polling table in Thomassin, east of Petionville, few voters had cast their votes and the same occurred in Kenscoff, 25 km from the Haitian capital, where the turnout was also low.

Several polling stations in Port-au-Prince confronted problems, because voters were not on the official voters list, but the situation in Saint Marc, Soleil, and Kenscoff was normal.

Some 1,000 observers are in Haiti to supervise the electoral process, and 300 of them are under OAS coordination.

Local analysts consider the presidential elections in Port-au- Prince a test of the military effort headed by the United States to restore democracy in this Caribbean country.

Aristide was deposed by a military coup in September 1991 and reinstated after an international military occupation headed by the United States in October 1994.

The big favorite in this election is former Prime Minister Rene Preval, 52, candidate of the Lavalas party, and according to the polls, he will defeat the other 13 contenders so overwhelmingly that a runoff election will not be necessary.

The Christian Democrats of former President Leslie Manigat, the centrists of Marc Bazin, and the Socialists of Serge Gilles have rejected the elections, and thus, boycotted the vote, and they accused the Provisional Electoral Council of favoring the government party.

Weak Voter Turnout Reported

PA1712225495 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1939 GMT 17 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Port-of-Prince, 17 Dec (NOTIMEX) — According to national and foreign observers, the presidential elections held today in Haiti were characterized by a weak popular voter turnout.

Polling stations opened their doors to receive voters early Sunday morning, but a number of voters were not able to vote because of inadequate information regarding the location of their corresponding polling stations.

In Petionville, a rich suburb of Port-of-Prince, the electoral offices opened at 0630 local time (2359 GMT) on Saturday, two hours earlier than in a majority of the poorer neighborhoods.

In Carrefour, a poor district in the southern sector of the capital, many citizens wanting to cast their votes were not able to do so because they could not find their polling station, which physically did not correspond to those of the voters' registration offices.

The observers confirmed that in many instances there was no information regarding the polling stations, which explains why large number of voters spent most of Sunday morning in search of their polling station.

A voter in Carrefour told NOTIMEX shortly before noon that he had been looking for his polling booth since 0660 local time, and since he could not find it, he went to church. He added that he would continue to search later on until he found out where to vote.

Other voters who were luckier were able to vote in Petionville.

Jacques, a young unemployed man, said that he vote "to end the violation of human rights in Haiti," and reported that in 1993 and 1994, he was beaten a number of times by paramilitary groups of the former military regime because he was a supporter of Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

In Cite Soleil, another poor neighborhood in Port-of-Prince, not many voters were lined up in front of polling stations. The longest line, which was in the school building being constructed in Cite Soleil, included only a few dozen citizens.

Justin, another unemployed youth, said that he hoped a new government would "improve the country's situation," and added that he was in favor of improving the situation of "those people who did not have any say in government" — the poor people.

Hughes, a street peddler, complained about the high cost of living and the difficulty in feeding his six sons.

Hughes added that a danger existed that the "United States could steal the victory from the people," referring to the possibility that it would not recognize the likely victory of candidate Ren Preval, who is backed by Aristide.

Reporters were able to determine that preparations of the electoral machinery seemed at first sight to be without reproach and the presidents of the polling stations seemed to know what to do at each stage of the process.

A large number of members from the international community was present, with no fewer than 500 observers, 300 of them from the OAS, headed by Secretary General

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Cesar Gaviria. A delegation led by International Development Agency (USAID) Administrator Brian Atwood also observed the elections.

Few incidents were reported on Sunday morning and the more common ones involved the lack of security at the voting sites.

Permanent Electoral Council (CEP) President Pierre-Michel Sajous said the security problems were under control thanks to the joint task of the National Police and UN Mission for Haiti (Minuha) forces.

Besides the absenteeism, the presidential candidates had no major criticism for the electoral process.

There were a total of 14 candidates running for president, but only Preval, the Lavalas Political Platform (PPL) candidate, appears as the favorite in a survey made public during the weekend in Port- au-Prince. Preval, according to the survey, will receive 65 percent of the votes.

The vote-count will begin after ballot boxes are closed at 1800 local time (1100 GMT) and in the presence of the "election watch and control unit," a mechanism created by the political parties as an observer entity.

The participation of the improved election watch and control unit was hailed by Colin Granderson, chief of the UN civilian mission in Haiti, and the OAS contingent of observers.

The first nonofficial election results are expected to be announced Sunday night. The official results will be published within eight days, according to the CEP.

Preval 'Seems To Be' Winner

PA1812033895 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0238 GMT 18 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Port-au-Prince, 17 Dec (NOTIMEX) — Authorities have reported that Rene Preval, who is the candidate for the Lavalas Political Platform [Plataforma Politica Lavalas] (PPL), seems to be the winner of the presidential elections held today in Haiti.

The vote-counting process started at [words indistinct], local time, and according to the reports obtained from several electoral offices, the PPL candidate seems to be the winner, way ahead of the rest of the candidates.

The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), which is the only organization lawfully authorized to make public the results of the elections, announced that it will make public the official results of today's elections on 27 December.

The most sensitive operation of the elections day, which elapsed without serious incidents and with a low voter turnout, took place after the polling stations closed, when the seals of the ballot boxes were broken and the count began.

Once the count ended and once the ballots were returned to the boxes, these are shipped to the local or departmental electoral offices under strict police surveillance. [passage omitted]

OAS Leader Views Low Turnout

PA1812050095 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0414 GMT 18 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Port-au-Prince, 17 Dec (EFE) — OAS Secretary General Cesar Gaviria has said that the desire of many voters that Jean Bertrand Aristide continue at the presidency constituted a significant reason for the high abstention rate observed during the presidential elections held today in Haiti.

"There were many citizens who wanted Aristide to remain in his post, and this was undoubtedly a factor for the lack of demobilization," the former Colombian president told EFE.

Gaviria listed other factors that, in his opinion, contributed to make the residents not cast their votes: the short electoral campaign — less than a month — the electorate was tired — five elections in six months — and the boycott by some of the main opposition parties.

However, Gaviria stressed that the elections were "a success," because, for the first time in Haiti's republican history, for the first time since 1804, there has been a peaceful and democratic transition."

"Haitians were able to vote without intimidations, without fears, without violence," the OAS secretary general affirmed.

There still is no official figures for the people's participation rate in the Haitian presidential elections held today. The most pessimistic estimates indicate that the abstention rate could reach approximately 80 percent.

This high figure was confirmed by both the reporters who visited most of the electoral tables installed in the capital, and observers from multinational organizations who travelled to the countryside. They found, in certain cases, abstention rates higher than 90 percent.

Meanwhile, the OAS rated the voter turnout as "low to moderate" in a communique made public two hours after the polls close. The Pan-American organization, which deployed 150 teams throughout the country and which visited approximately 20 percent of the voting tables, pointed to the positive role the "Provisional Electoral Council" (CEP) played.

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This council, which is in charge of the technical organization and development of the elections, was highly criticized during the legislative elections held in June 1995. However, today we could observe a much better organization, even though there were certain irregularities such as missing lists in certain tables and lack of registrations by candidates in the lists.

The CEP president announced that the official electoral results will be released on 27 December, even though certain partial departmental results will be made public earlier.

In the meantime, the OAS will conduct an exit poll on the results with a 3 percent margin of error. This exit poll will probably be ready on 18 December; however, its results will not be made public.

Aristide Views 'Emergency' Infrastructure Projects

PA1612140795 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 15 Dec 95

[From the "Waking Up" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Jean-Bertrand Aristide personally went to the Carrefour area yesterday morning in order to address the residents of this commune about several emergency projects such as the construction of a new public high school and the rehabilitation of the main road between Carrefour and Port-au-Prince.

The inhabitants of this area do not know what to do because of the traffic jams which have become a routine. It takes several hours to get downtown or one must get up earlier than usual to walk if one does not want one's business to be disturbed, a resident commented.

At the height of this serious crisis affecting this area, the head of the executive proposed to fly to the assistance of Carrefour inhabitants by announcing the beginning of work on the remodeling of this road, which will cost about $7 million. This road links the capital to several other departments.

Let us listen to Haitian head of state Jean-Bertrand Aristide:

[Begin Aristide recording, in Creole, in progress] ...announced how much of that $20 million, that is nearly 120 Haitian dollars, will be used to allow the Carrefour road to become... [crowd answers: "better"] better? If this job is not done, do I shoulder the entire responsibility? [crowd answers: "No"] I also share the responsibility, but I do not shoulder the entire responsibility. Can you help me? [crowd answers: "Yes"] Can you help the minister of public works? [crowd answers: "Yes"] Yes, you can.

I ask everybody who cannot use the Carrefour road this morning because we have been compelled to block traffic in order to mark the starting of this work; I ask them to understand us, excuse us, and I tell them: Thanks in advance for their understanding. [passage omitted] We have chosen to block traffic in order to make transparency, that is, to show all drivers, all pedestrians, all people living in Carrefour, and all other Haitians who are observing that we are ready for the starting of the road, and we have chosen to make this short and temporary traffic jam so everybody can see clearly: first, that it is not false promises, that is transparency because the money is available, the work must begin so as to allow you not to experience the same amount of traffic jams you are used to experiencing on the Carrefour road. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Furthermore, President Aristide took advantage of his talk with the inhabitants of Carrefour to tackle the question of the high cost of living that tends to worsen from time to time. The president of the Republic recalled the new tariffs for sugar — a product which is expensive and rare in these last days — due to new arrivals on the Haitian market. Aristide confirmed that authorities will not hesitate to intervene when it proves necessary to control the cost of living in accordance with the means at his disposal.

[Begin Aristide recording, in Creole] A government is there to bring order where there is disorder. There is disorder in the question of the high cost of living, in the question of black market or white market [as heard], in the question of the fluctuations of prices. They decrease slightly and then increase to the soaring height of a palm tree leaf. So, even though it does not claim to be interventionist, without bowing down before anything called neoliberalism, this government has chosen to bring order where there is disorder and to control things properly.

We have worked with the dollar, so we can make the U.S. dollar's value decrease and make the gourde's value increase. The increasing prices of goods are obliged to lower so they can conform to what we have done with the dollar operation. [end recording]

Trinidad & Tobago

Prime Minister Hospitalized With Chest Pains

PA1812040795 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0218 GMT 18 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Port of Spain, 17 Dec (NOTIMEX) — A medical aid center reported today that the prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Casdeo Panday, was hospitalized today in the capital after complaining

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of chest pains, just a month-and-a-half after taking office.

The source said that on Sunday, Panday, of the United National Congress [UNC], felt ill and was taken to the hospital by his wife, where he remains under observation in the intensive care unit.

A clinic spokesman, quoted by television stations' said the prime minister was "resting" without major complications and was expected to recover in a few hours.

According to Oma, Panday's wife, this is Panday's first relapse since undergoing heart surgery in London three years ago.

On 6 November, approximately 837,400 people registered in the electoral register for the Caribbean nation, went to the polls to renew their government, in advanced elections and in a tranquil climate.

The elections in Trinidad and Tobago, where approximately 1.3 million inhabitants of African and Indian origin dwell, were scheduled for December 1996, however, on 6 October outgoing Prime Minister Patrick Manning moved the election date forward.

Panday, a 63-year-old lawyer, main opposition leader for the past 20 years, will formally take office as the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago on Thursday.

The current new government leader heads a coalition government for National Reconstruction [ANR] directed by Ray Robinson.

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El Salvador

Economist Group Views Government Failures in 1995

PA1612022895 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 13 Dec 95 p 18A

[FBIS Translated Text] The Association of Economic Science Professionals [COLPROCE] yesterday said that, although the economy has improved by 15 percent, the government has had five failures and only two successes in the macroeconomic field.

COLPROCE said that the number of successes would have been higher had the Salvadoran Government instilled greater confidence in economic agents. First of all, the absence of rules in the economic policy led to mistrust by the economic agents. The two government successes were the following, according to COLPROCE: preserving macroeconomic stability and strengthening public finance through the revenue from the value-added tax and the income tax. COLPROCE also said there have been contradictions in the management of the monetary policy. These contradictions occurred because of the stress given dollarization, which led banks to acquire debts in dollars and increased liquidity. The most contradiction took place in the monetary policy, inflation, and exchange policy. "We wrongly put too much emphasis on dollarization," they said.

Monetary authorities insisted that the reduction of the legal deposit in dollars at the central bank and the homogenization of this legal deposit, with others in colones, would dollarize the economy. As a result, the private sector and banks signed up for debts in dollars, distorting the monetary program and creating contradictions in the monetary-exchange administration. It was at this time that the Central Bank of Reserve established a credit restriction to combat inflation, a measure that strangled the productive sector.

In addition, COLPRODE criticized the state modernization process, whose sole action so far has been to eliminate 15 government positions and leaving the privatization to be discussed in 1996. COLPRODE further said that the exporting basis has been left stagnated as the result of the aggravation of the commercial balance deficit, a situation that will aggravate even further with the second tariff-exemption stage because imports will increase.

The last failure mentioned was the current account deficit and unemployment increase. These are still manageable, but could become problems if proper attention is not paid to them. In October 1995, the current account showed a deficit 230.4 million colones because of the imports that increased before the value-added tax was established. Because of this, international reserves, which stood at $586.7 million in October 1995, should be monitored because they dropped by 5.5 percent in relation to 1994.

COLPRODE also said that the current account is being financed through short-term indebtedness with commercial banks. This could prove risky because of the sector's high volatility. If the commercial breach increases more than expected, it will have to be filled with foreign loans.

Macroeconomic Aspects at the End of 1995

— The year will end with an inflation rate of 11.5 percent.

— The interest rate on loans rose to 19.75 percent in local currency and 13.39 percent in foreign currency.

— Unemployment will increase as the result of a reduction in the construction area, assembly plant problems, and the elimination of public positions.

— The $230.4 million current account deficit represents 2.42 percent of the GNP as of October 1995. The deficit could increase in January with the elimination of tariff because imports will increase.

— International reserves of $1 billion as of November 1995.

— Successful fiscal policy through collections. The value-added tax collected: 3.7882 billion colones, and income tax collected: 2.3766 billion colones.

Guatemala

Gunmen Open Fire on PAN Caravan Accompanying Arzu

PA1812045395 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0334 GMT 18 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Guatemala City, 17 Dec (ACAN-EFE) — Party sources report that unknown gunmen fired from a moving automobile at a National Advancement Party [PAN] caravan accompanying their presidential candidate Alvaro Arzu. No casualties were reported.

Deputy Cesar Paiz denied that the act, which occurred in one of the country's eastern departments, was an attempt against Arzu, who moments before the shooting had entered the hotel in front of which the attack took place in which approximately 600 leaders and supporters were gathered.

The incident occurred at 1830 local time [0030 GMT] outside the Miramundo Hotel in the capital of Zacapa Department, 149 km east of the capital.

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Paiz described the armed incident as an act of intimidation against the political group, whose candidate won the 12 November elections with 36 percent of the votes, but without enough vote to avoid the second round on 7 January.

Arzu will contest the presidency of Guatemala with the candidate who received the second most votes Alfonso Portillo, candidate for the Guatemalan Republican Front [FRG].

Witnesses said that the shots were mistaken for firecrackers, which were set off in the area to welcome Arzu, who had finished campaigning in Zacapa and Chiquimula.

Organization leaders presented a complaint in the military zone of the department.

The incident did not interrupt Arzu's activities, who after visiting other sites return tonight to the capital.

Restricting Changes for Next Government

96CA0080A Guatemala City CRONICA in Spanish 10 Nov 95 p 27

[Article by Iduvina Hernandez]

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest chess ploys made among the military chiefs show a confused match. The Army high command claims that the most recent changes in the military headquarters are merely routine, and not based on a specific plan. Other spokesmen, however, find it disturbing that certain generals questioned about presumed violations of the law are climbing to higher positions on the military pyramid. The fear in diplomatic and human rights circles is that the next president of the republic may be denied the opportunity to make substantial modifications in the military chain of command.

False Move

Based on instructions from the high command, several colonels and generals had their stations changed as of 1 November. Consequently, General Horacio Soto Salam, who was serving as commander of the General Headquarters, is now directing the Army Inspector General's Office. Soto's post has been assigned to General Luis Felipe Miranda Trejo, who had been chief of the Playa Grande military base.

Although the instructions from the high command include other changes and rotations, the appointments of Soto Salam and Miranda Trejo have aroused the most suspicions. Until now, the General Headquarters command and the Army Inspector General's Office have been posts assigned to those considered in the line of succession for defense minister and chief of staff. And that is what concerns those objecting to these appointments. General Miranda Trejo is facing a trial for military recruitment of minors. Moreover, he is accused of having obstructed the resettlement of refugees in Ixcan, and is linked with the kidnapping of officials from the MINUGUA [UN Mission for Guatemala] and the UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees], which occurred in that part of the country during June of this year.

As for Soto Salam, who is also a member of the governmental Peace Commission (COPAZ), the greatest objections are focused on the fact that he is suspected of human rights violations. Furthermore, he is described as an inflexible military man, opposed to deepseated changes in the armed institution.

Therefore, the message that diplomatic circles believe they perceive in these appointments is contrary to the one that the authorities presumably wish to convey. The diplomats' fear is that, with Miranda and Soto placed in important positions, the chief executive due to take office in January will have limited options for freely selecting the military chiefs.

Castling Cut Short

The Defense Ministry is attempting to shield itself from criticism. The explanation given for the latest ploys, including Colonel Jose Manuel Rivas' replacement as chief of the Intelligence Directorate, is that they are all routine shifts. "The changes are completely normal," claims the Army's press chief, Colonel Guillermo Caal. He maintains that all the officers realize that they are only birds of passage in the posts to which they are assigned. Besides, he adds, any promotion is made by evaluating merits and individual training.

Another story also is reportedly circulating in the high command, to the effect that it is impossible to please those who expect to see radical changes in the headquarters, because there are only two months left until the change of command in the government. The military authorities further claim that no general is receiving a favor, considering the fact that the last two defense ministers did not obtain the post after having held that of Army Inspector General. This opinion apparently is not shared by all the military chiefs. According to diplomatic sources, the present commander of the Quetzaltenango base, General Sergio Arnoldo Camargo, has expressed negative opinions concerning the shifts made by the high command. Camargo reportedly did so because he saw in the chessboard moves, rather than a better positioning of certain generals, the path toward the departure of the members of the oldest graduating classes. If this

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hypothesis is confirmed, the high command's decisions would facilitate a possible farewell to at least five generals, including Camargo himself, in January, when the new government takes office.

Sources associated with the Presidential House hint that an effort is already in progress to pave the way for the military succession. So much so, they note, that, last week, there was a secret meeting between the current president and the Army's commander in chief, Ramiro de Leon, and one of the favorites for the presidency, Alvaro Arzu. Among other topics, De Leon and Arzu reportedly discussed the options for the change of authority in the military command.

In any event, if it was the military chiefs' intention to make apparently logical, and even conservative changes, to prevent mistrust among the officers, they failed to gauge the effects that their ploys would cause outside the armed institution. Instead of dispelling storm clouds, the appointments of Soto and Miranda could lead to another checking of the military authorities.

Panama

Delegates Reelect President as PRD Secretary General

PA1812013695 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2323 GMT 17 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Panama City, 17 Dec (ACAN-EFE) — An overwhelming majority today reelected Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares as secretary general of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) during the 5th National Congress the political party held today in this capital.

The other members of the National Executive Committee (CEN) were also ratified in their posts by the 1,787 delegates who attended the convention, in which the members of the National Directorate, an honor court, and a prosecutor were elected.

As expected, Perez Balladares was proclaimed PRD secretary general thanks to the support of 1,660 delegates, while Legislator Gerardo Gonzalez will continue to be PRD president and Labor Minister Mitchell Doens and Housing Minister Francisco Sanchez Cardenas, as subsecretaries. In addition, Tomas Altamirano Duque, who is the first vice president of the Republic, remains as PRD vice president.

During the 5th Congress, which was held under the slogan of: "A United PRD Toward the Year 2000," a resolution in which the party stresses its support to the government of Perez Balladares and to his negotiation strategies on the U.S. military bases was approved.

In order to inject a more enriching dynamics into political activities, the democratization of the institutions of the Panamanian State, the fight against state bureaucracy, sectarianism, and corruption are other aspects that stand out in the PRD Congress' final resolution.

Likewise, the document stated that Panama has recovered its international prestige thanks to the PRD and its fight against drug trafficking and money laundering and that the international community has again recognized Panama "as it was recognized during the best times of General Omar Torrijos, who died in 1981 and who founded the party. [no closing quotation mark as received]

Perez Balladares, in his speech closing the Congress, thanked the delegates for the vote of confidence he received and committed himself to increase the government works, do away with bureaucracy, and create the conditions for the PRD to again win the elections in 1999 and receive the Panama Canal. The United States will turn the canal over to Panama on 31 December 1999, on which date the last U.S. soldier will also withdraw from Panama, in keeping with the treaty which the two nations signed in 1977.

The president was concerned by the excessive red tape existing in Panama which "hinders and delays everything" and asked to be followed in a crusade to end the red tape and facilitate the advent of foreign investors.

In an eminently economic tone, Perez Balladares warned that Panama is losing its comparative advantages resulting from its geographical position in respect to other countries, and that to gain lost ground the state had to be modernized.

Regarding the possible renegotiation of a U.S. military presence past the year 2,000, Perez Balladares insisted that the issue must be faced, and reject not talking with Washington on the issue, however, always keeping in mind the tangible economic benefits that Panama could receive.

Moreover, he asked that "differences put aside, and that no more recriminations and internal disputes occur between the Torrijistas," in reference to some members of the party who reject changes to the PRD's statutes, which, according to critics, impede the existence of alternative candidates.

The CEN election by secret ballot is "unequivocal proof of our democratic vocation," Perez Balladares, who said he was not afraid of criticism or lies, emphasized.

Perez Balladares vowed to respect freedom of speech in the country, because "thanks to this respect, Panama has

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recovered its international prestige. If the world used to viewed us with contempt and pity, now it views us with admiration and respect."

With these words he wanted to settle the controversy unleashed by a recent visit of an Inter-American Press Association [IAPA] delegation, which evaluated the freedom of speech in the nation following accusations made against Perez Balladares by the ESTRELLA DE PANAMA, which accused him of economically strangling the newspaper by withdrawing government advertising.

Representatives of the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] and PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] of Mexico, the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] of El Salvador, the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] of Nicaragua, the PRD of the Dominican Republic, the Communist Party of China, the Communist Party of Cuba, and The Labor Party of Israel, were present at the congress.

President Views Plans for Exploratory Talks With U.S.

Nation 'Not Prepared' for Talks

PA1512153795 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 15 Dec 95 p 2

[Report by Ibeth Vega G.]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ernesto Perez Balladares affirmed yesterday that Panama is not prepared for the time being to take up again the topic of exploratory talks with the United States to study the stay of U.S. military bases beyond 2000 and that, on the contrary, work is being done to expedite the transition process.

"It is an initiative that in any case would have to come from the two countries, and we are not yet prepared to explore the topic," Perez Balladares said.

Panama and the United States suspended the exploratory talks they had scheduled to begin on 30 November due to a difference between the two countries over payment by the United States of a lease to maintain its bases here.

The talks were going to be held at the Foreign Ministry, and the president appointed a presidential commission in that regard, but Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo announced the suspension days before the talks were to begin.

Asked about the waiting period between Panama and the United States before beginning the talks, Perez Balladares said "there is no waiting period. We continue to work all the time, as if there were no possibilities of a U.S. stay in Panama to benefit us."

No 'Waiting Period' Before Talks

PA1512153895 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 15 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Carlos Vargas]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the topic of the U.S. military bases and the reverted areas, President Ernesto Perez Balladares said yesterday his government "is working as if there was no possibility the U.S. bases would stay in Panama" beyond 2000.

Perez Balladares said his government is continuing with the program to attract investments to exploit the potential of the areas that would revert to Panama and affirmed that work is being done "as if there were not going to be" U.S. military bases beyond the end of this century.

He said that there is no "waiting period" to resume the exploratory talks on the topic of the stay of the U.S. bases and that his government is maintaining its position that the U.S. presence entails tangible benefits for Panamanians.

Perez Balladares' remarks come one day after his meeting with ranking U.S. officers General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, and General Barry McCaffrey, U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, to discuss the future of the U.S. bases.

Three weeks ago Panama and the United States suspended the start of exploratory talks to analyze whether it is advisable to maintain some U.S. military presence beyond 2000.

In another matter, the president criticized the manner in which a poll was prepared by the Isthmian Economic and Social Studies Foundation [Fundacion Istmena de Estudios Economicos y Sociales — FIEES] that has revealed that the president and the ministers pay the least taxes.

Perez Balladares said the individuals who prepared the survey "are not informed," because it is impossible for public officials to evade paying taxes, given they are automatically deducted by the Comptroller General's Office.

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Joint Initiative Needed for Talks

PA1512193995 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Report by Jose Ivan Ramos from the "Telemetro Reports" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Referring to the issues of the U.S. bases once again, President Ernesto Perez Balladares has said the initiative for possible exploratory talks must stem from both countries and not only from Panama, as William Hughes, the U.S. ambassador to Panama, has said:

[Begin Perez Balladares recording] No, I believe this is not right. If he has said this statement, it is not right. It is an initiative that, in any case, would have to stem from both countries. On our side, we still are not willing to explore the issue. [end recording]

Perez Balladares, who has inaugurated a new electrical customs-control system at Tocumen Airport, added that the United States gave the initial step to start the exploratory talks and that Panama is not waiting for those talks to begin:

[Begin Perez Balladares recording] We are still working at full speed, as if there were no possibility of the United States remaining in Panama in a manner that would benefit us; that is, we are working as if this will not happen. We are still working to attract investors, people, and firms interested in giving adequate use to those areas. We are not waiting for anything; quite the contrary, we are speeding up our steps. [end recording]

After the exploratory talks were suspended three weeks ago, the issue arose again after U.S. General John Shalikashvili visited the country and met with Perez Balladares. After the meeting with the president, the military officer said he hoped the Panamanian and U.S. Governments would reassume the exploratory talks on the bases in a not too distant future.

Pollees Favor New Canal Administrator From PCC

PA1412231395 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 11 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Jose Quintero de Leon]

[FBIS Translated Text] The next Canal Administrator should come from the Panama Canal Commission [PCC] rather from a different sector, according to an opnion poll conducted by the consulting firm Dichter & Neira from 1 to 3 December.

The enterprise interviewed 1,248 people over 18 years old, males and females, of various economic strata, various educational levels, and residing in eight provinces, and excluding the Darien and Kuna Yala region. The poll of opinion's margin of error was approximately 3 percent.

Asked whether the "next Canal administrator should be a government, opposition, or independent professional, or someone from the PCC," 61 percent answered from the PCC. In addition, 30.6 percent wanted him to be independent; 3.6 percent said he should be from the opposition, and 3 percent said he should be from the government.

Women constituted the majority of those who preferred the candidate from the PCC, by 62.8 percent. As to place, the residents of Panama province were most likely to prefer the PCC candidate; as to age, the ages ranged from 18 and 29 (66.2 percent).

Another question asked was: "Are you in favor of or against the Amnesty Draft Law"?; 60.9 percent opposed its approval and 18.8 percent favored it; 20.3 percent were undecided and declined to answer. In this sense, males, by 62.2 percent, showed stiffer opposition to the measure than females. The greatest opposition to the amnesty was found in the metropolitan area, with 62.3 percent, and persons over 50 years of age were the most reluctant for this approval, by 63.1 percent.

As for President Ernesto Perez Balladares, it showed a 10 point reduction in popularity with respect to the penultimate poll, conducted in September. According to the report, 44.3 percent of the pollees think his actions as president are "good" and 4.4 percent think them "excellent," for a total of 48.7 percent overall. However, 42.9 percent said it is "poor" and 7.3 percent believe it is "very poor," for a total of 50.2 percent.

Three months ago, a similar survey of opinion revealed that 66 percent of the pollees regarded the president's term between "excellent and good" against 34 percent which regarded it between "poor and very poor."

One aspect that revealed a change of stance in the Panamanian people was the question: "Do you favor or oppose the presence of some U.S. military bases in the country after the year 2000 if Panama does not collect rent for these bases?" To this question, 49.8 percent answered yes and 40.2 percent disagreed. In addition, 10 percent declined to answer. A larger percentage of women (51.7 percent) favored the bases' presence than males (47.8 percent). In the disagreement, however, more males — by 43.4 percent — disagree with this permanence than females, with 37.1 percent. The most interested in the presence of some bases are residents of the metropolitan area, by 53.9 percent, than the rest of the country.

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Bolivia

New Extradition Treaty With U.S. 'Showcase' of 'Errors'

PY1512164395 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 23 Nov 95 p 2

[Article by Attorney Jorge Oblitas Ortiz]

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest Extradition Treaty signed with the United States under pain of decertification is a showcase of the Bolivian diplomatic history of errors and surrenders.

Under this treaty, any Bolivian accused in the United States of any crime (even a minor one) can be uprooted from his/her land and taken to a U.S. jail, and those wanted for serious crimes will be necessarily extradited. This is provided for in Article 3 of the Extradition Treaty, which says: "Neither of the parties shall be obliged to extradite its citizens, save when the extradition request refers to...." It then enumerates a long list of crimes that encompasses nearly half of the Bolivian Penal Code and other crimes that are not included in our legislation. Extradition is obligatory in these cases and no objection can be made. Thus the discretional powers of the Supreme Court are not respected when the extradition is being decided, because it is not even mentioned in this document.

The legal principle indicating that "the contracting countries are not obliged to hand over their countrymen" no matter the type of crime that has been committed is contained in all international treaties on extradition that our country has signed. This is a universally acknowledged norm. This, of course, does not mean letting a criminal who had violated the legal order of a country go free, because this would violate the legal need to ensure that crime not go unpunished, and it would create chaos in international relations and in regard to the universal obligation of fighting and punishing crime.

But this legal action must be taken in the country of the accused if he is in said country. In this respect, Article 345 of the Bustamante Code [dealing with international private law] says: "The nation that refuses to hand over one of its citizens will be obliged to bring him to trial."

In this case, the requesting nation must provide proof and evidence so that the judges of the nation of refuge can bring the accused to trial and hand down the appropriate sentence if the accused is guilty, and the country making the claim must then be informed about this sentence. However, a nation must never hand over its own sons to be judged in another country.

This is a topic that should never be discussed because extradition as a legal institution within the framework of international law is only applied to foreigners who are fleeing from the law and who have sought refuge in a country that is not their own and a nation requires them to bring them to trial. Against all logic, this treaty seems to have been conceived in such a way as to exclusively take away Bolivians.

Only rarely have states that take pride in their sovereign power extradited citizens so that they may be prosecuted outside their own territory. On the contrary, our contemporary history shows cases in which small and weak countries have refused to extradite their citizens to powerful nations even if they had to endure the most unfair pressures or suffer the most despicable retaliation as a consequence.

The Bustamante Code approved in 1928 and ratified by Bolivia in 1932; the Montevideo Convention on Extradition (1933); and all the bilateral treaties Bolivia signed with the United Kingdom (1892), Belgium (1908), Brazil (1908), Chile (1910), Ecuador (1913), Italy (1890), Venezuela (1833), and the United States (1900) unequivocally establish the principle that extradition will not apply to nationals of the state of refuge. Some countries like El Salvador and Colombia had incorporated this prohibition into their constitutions, thus affirming full sovereignty not only over their territories, but also over their citizens' right to be tried in their own country. Colombia, a country which is very similar to ours, and which experiences the same problems, has had the courage to refuse to extradite Colombian nationals. Article 35 of the Colombian Constitution promulgated in 1991 says, and I quote: "The extradition of those who are Colombians by birth is prohibited. Colombians who have committed crimes abroad — crimes which are considered as such by Colombian laws — shall be prosecuted and tried in Colombia."

This legislation constitutes a lesson that our diplomacy must assimilate as an example of sovereignty and dignity so that our country will never get down on its knees renouncing its rights in exchange for economic aid or certification.

Alleged Chief of MRTA Southern Command Arrested

PY1412211495 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1914 GMT 14 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cochabamba, Bolivia, 14 Dec (EFE) — Bolivian police today identified the alleged chief of the Southern Command of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), Peruvian Elizabeth Aida Ochoa Mamani, who was captured on 12 December in Cochabamba by agents of the state intelligence services.

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Juan Luis Ledezma, a prosecutor attached to the Bolivian Judicial Technical Police (PTJ), reported that when captured, Ochoa was found in possession of ammunition for military use, such as 9-mm bullets, explosives, and writings of Chinese leader Mao Tse Tung.

The Peruvian entered Bolivia on an unknown date under the name of Maria del Carmen Ochoa Miranda, and obtained a Bolivian identity card in La Paz.

Ochoa, who had escaped from the prison located in Juliaca, Peru, was arrested during the early morning of 12 December in a house located in Cochabamba, 383 km east of La Paz.

The authorities have decided to continue with the investigation in La Paz due to the fact that Ochoa, who is pregnant and has two children, is the wife of a high-ranking MRTA leader.

Brazil

Shots Fired at U.S. Consulate in Sao Paulo

PY1612024195 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 0145 GMT 16 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sao Paulo, 15 Dec (AE) — Lucia de Fatima Almeida Santos, 40, a medical doctor, early tonight fired small lead shots [tiros de chumbinho] at the U.S. Consulate General on Padre Joao Manoel Street, Jardins District, breaking some windows. Lucia, who lives in Cajamar, greater Sao Paulo, and works at the cabinet-makers union, said that she carried out the attack because she is against the U.S. Government. According to her, the Amazon Region Surveillance System (Sivam), was the "straw that broke the camel's back" that led her to carry out the attack. Lucia bought the shotgun, which looks like a submachine gun, today in the Ao Gaucho store, downtown. Beside firing shots, she threw a record of [Brazilian musician] Tom Jobim on the sidewalk in front of the consulate. The case was registered by the 78th Police District.

Cardoso 'Not Obliged' To Maintain Sivam Contract

PY1612012495 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Report from Shanghai by Maria Isabel Freitas — passages within slantlines indicate President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's recorded statements]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Fernando Henrique Cardoso today visited the historic city of Xian, 1300 km southwest of Beijing. Xian was the Chinese capital at the beginning of the century and is the origin of the Chinese imperial dynasties. Tomorrow he will visit Shanghai, the largest industrial port in the PRC.

President Cardoso today granted a news conference in the PRC. He referred to the Sivam [Amazon Region Surveillance System] project.

/I want to know if some points must be analyzed more deeply, to see if something affects the contract with Raytheon. That is what counts. If something is wrong, we will correct it. If not, the relationship with ESCA [Automation and Control Systems Engineering] will be (?investigated) but in another plane, like in the administrative field, but this has nothing to do with Sivam. ESCA cannot participate in the project./

President Cardoso again asserted that if any irregularity in the Sivam project is proven, the whole process will be annulled.

/I have always said so. If there is really something that leads us to say the contract with Raytheon cannot be maintained, why should I maintain it? I am not obliged to do so. On the contrary, it is my duty to safeguard national interests, and I will do so./

Cardoso said there must be a strong reason to annul the contract with Raytheon.

/A company has been selected: Raytheon. I must have a reason to explain why it cannot participate, otherwise there would be no seriousness. That is my only concern and I think it is also the Senate's concern. Because of one Brazilian company — which was full of problems — we cannot suddenly, without explanation, harm a third company. That is the issue. The issue is not that the administration will not look good. Not investigating the problem thoroughly would not make us look good. We will go deep into this to really verify the best way to carry out the Sivam project./

The president denied the existence of crisis between the administration and the PFL [Liberal Front Party].

/I do not know what crisis you are talking about. I have often seen it mentioned in the newspapers but I think there is no reason for a crisis with the PFL. On the contrary, I think the PFL has always maintained a very correct attitude toward the administration as I have toward them. They have my greatest consideration./

Senators Discuss Raytheon Exclusion From Sivam Project

PY1612015495 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2326 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia, 15 Dec (AE) — Several senators who support the government have said the U.S. Raytheon Company may be excluded from the contract for the installation of the Amazon Region Surveillance System (Sivam). The matter was

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discussed, over the phone, with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso on 13 December. Cardoso is currently visiting China. The senators told the president that the project, as it stands now, will be rejected by the Senate. Elcio Alvares (PFL-DF) [Liberal Front Party for the Federal District], government leader in the Senate, admitted: "There is no definite stance yet but there is a strong tendency recommending the government to plan Raytheon's exclusion."

Jose Roberto Arruda (PSDB-DF) [Brazilian Social Democracy Party for the Federal District], government bloc deputy leader, believes the project was seriously affected by Aeronautics Minister Lelio Lobo's explanation. One minister was overheard by AGENCIA ESTADO after Lelio Lobo's statement early this week saying: "This is going to fail, there is no way to save it."

The senators believe the fact that Raytheon's prices are known to be excessive — which violates a U.S. law on the performance of U.S. companies abroad — would help make the decision.

Initially the senators decided that it would be up to Senate Chairman Jose Sarney (PMDB-AP) [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party for the Amapa State], to talk to President Fernando Henrique. By the time he finally managed to get through to the president, Government Leader Elcio Alvares (PFL-ES) [Liberal Front Party for Espirito Santo], PSDB Leader Sergio Machado (CE) [Ceara], and Senator Antonio Carlos Magalhaes had already been in touch with him for the same purpose. They did not reveal what they discussed.

Elcio Alvares only said he is awaiting the president's return to Brazil to announce the government's decision regarding the Sivam project. He said the decision made will solve the issue both for the government and for the Senate. He said: "It is a coordinated solution that depends on the negotiations currently underway." He added: "All I can say is that everything will be done in keeping with the president's philosophy of maintaining what is right and correcting what is wrong."

Senators Sarney, Magalhaes React to Pink File Case

PY1612014695 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Congress President Senator Jose Sarney wants the Central Bank [BC] to thoroughly investigate the pink file case. He said he suspects that names of politicians were used to cover up an operation to divert money from the Economico Bank.

[Begin Sarney recording] I am beginning to consider this as a serious matter because I think money from the Economico Bank was diverted by using some people's names. For example, myself. I did not receive the sums mentioned in that file, or any donation from the Economico Bank. This means someone must have used politicians names to divert money from the Economico Bank. [end recording]

Irritated over the leak of information from the pink file in possession of the Central Bank, Senator Antonio Carlos Magalhaes accused BC directors of not taking any action to punish those responsible for the bankruptcy of the Economico Bank.

[Begin Magalhaes recording] Those responsible for the mistakes of the Economico Bank, like [Economico Bank owner] Angelo Calmon de Sa, have not suffered anything. The Central Bank has done nothing about him, and there he is, riding around on his yacht. His yacht was not confiscated. None of his properties were confiscated. Angelo Calmon de Sa is totally free, playing with the Central Bank.

The Central Bank is not doing anything against him because it is very close to him. BC President Gustavo Loyola used to work for [former Finance Minister] Mailson da Nobrega who in turn was an Economico Bank consultant. This is why everything is as it is. The people of Bahia are suffering, and Angelo Calmon de Sa is not suffering at all. The Economico Bank case must be solved even if Angelo Calmon de Sa has to put up the money for it. [end recording]

The Central Bank directors did not want to comment on the statements by Senator Magalhaes.

Financial Streamlining Program Suspended by Court

PY1612015895 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Judge Celene Maria de Almeida, from Brasilia, has just made a preliminary decision suspending the Program To Encourage the Reorganization and Strengthening of the National Financial System, Proer, on bank mergers and incorporations.

This government program, with its subsidized interests rates, was created to streamline the financial market. It was contested in court by the Sao Paulo State bank employees labor union.

Chile

Exporters, Insulza Assess Talks With Mercosur

PY1512154595 Santiago ESTRATEGIA in Spanish 13 Dec 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] The exporters are the most interested in learning in detail about the negotiations

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Chile is carrying out with Mercosur, and that is only natural. However, negotiations within the private sector have not been the best, and this is why the National Exporters Association has decided to meet directly with Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza.

It was learned that during the meeting, which was held yesterday, the minister gave a lengthy explanation about what has been done so far and voiced his optimism that a definite agreement will be reached before 31 March, as had been intended.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the National Association of Fruit Exporters, the Association of Exporters of Nontraditional Manufactured Goods (Asexma), the Federation of Food Processors and Agroindustries (Fepach), the Association of Wine Exporters, the Association of Salmon Exporters, National Fisheries Association (Sonapesca), and the Chilean Lumber Corporation (Corma).

The businessmen reached their conclusions after the meeting, in which — it was asserted — only the subjects disclosed to the media were raised.

For example, they are certain that some of the products currently included in the long-standing trade agreement of Mercosur member countries will be transferred to the list of sensitive products or the list of exceptions.

What will happen to the list of exceptions depends on the dialogue the government maintains with the National Agricultural Association, because the negotiations slated for the coming weeks will be focused on this sector's products. To the extent that some agricultural products are liberalized, progress may also be made in the gradual customs tariff reduction, by Mercosur, on Chilean products with a greater added value.

But the exporters still have some doubts. Among them is the fate of the specific rights imposed by Argentina on some products, such as textile items. Seemingly, the idea is to eliminate them when Chile signs the agreement, but this is still not quite clear.

More confusing still is the situation of the 3 percent statistical rate also implemented by Argentina on all its imports.

In order to further assess these issues, the exporters hope to meet next week with the experts negotiating the agreement.

Agriculture Minister on Exceptions for Mercosur

PY1612002195 Santiago ESTRATEGIA in Spanish 14 Dec 95 p 8

[Interview with Agriculture Minister Emiliano Ortega by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [ESTRATEGIA] Do you think the terms Mercosur [Common Market of the South] proposes are prudent?

[Ortega] When we disclosed some measures to develop the agricultural sector we talked about terms of 15 years. A 15-year term is prudent but for some sectors I also think it is prudent to establish a list, as short as possible, of exceptions.

[ESTRATEGIA] What do you think about cancelling those exceptions at the end of that 15-year term?

[Ortega] In relative terms, I interpret the scope of the expression cancel as trying to reduce the list, which does not mean eliminate it. This has not been raised by the International Economic Relations Interministerial Committee nor is it a stance we have formally upheld as a country. In my opinion the term chosen is not the most adequate because it gives the idea of eliminating, which may suggest things which, in my opinion, are not inconvenient. I don't think the idea is to eliminate the exceptions.

[ESTRATEGIA] Do you think the exceptions should be kept?

[Ortega] The list can be cut back, but some exceptions should remain.

[ESTRATEGIA] What agricultural products should be included on this list of exceptions?

[Ortega] I am going to mention a single example because this subject is being discussed by the producers. I would keep beef on the list of exceptions with a quota system so that the Mercosur member countries may have access to our market because we are not self-sufficient.

[ESTRATEGIA] But beef is precisely one of the products Mercosur should want to liberalize. Moreover, placing it on the list of exceptions would greatly limit our trade with some countries...

[Ortega] That is right. These are facts and, in view of them, one must adopt a stance, and this is my stance. The livestock sector has endured very difficult times, the country has not made enough efforts to increase its productivity.

In Mercosur's case, the sectors that see advantages in this agreement should understand that society as a whole

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must make an effort for those who must adjust their productivity. This type of agreement cannot and should not be regarded as something imposed, but rather as an option. An alternative should be created for those who do not see a clear option.

[ESTRATEGIA] But it is also a fact that Mercosur is the greatest market for our manufactured goods and some of those products may be included in the list of exceptions in retaliation, to the extent that Chile includes agricultural goods on the list of exceptions.

[Ortega] The spirit that prevails in the negotiations with Mercosur is one of cooperation. We are talking about joint investments, physical integration, integration in the energy field, opening through our infrastructure for Mercosur to have access to the Asian world. Our expectations should adjust to reality. Everyone should made sure that their rural sectors enjoy a certain degree of stability in this process.

Daily Evaluates Obstacles in Association With Mercosur

PY1512231895 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 12 Dec 95 p C3

[Editorial: "Negotiations With Mercosur"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The negotiations with the Mercosur [Common Market of the South] have created a controversy and this is why national organizations have expressed their position in view of an eventual agreement with the subregional bloc. After the talks between Chile and the Mercosur became stagnated, the Chilean foreign minister was able to get more time in Punta del Este for the technical evaluation of the proposals.

The talks involve complex agreements with a recently created organization, which includes economies that are more protectionist than ours and with conflicting interests, especially in the agricultural field. It is also necessary to realize that some of the members of the Mercosur are having problems in their balance of payments and are reticent to external competition. Therefore, despite the desire to have the studies conclude "as soon as possible" to prevent trade between Mercosur and Chile from being affected, a decision was made to extend the bilateral agreement between the parties to 31 March 1996.

Officials must see that an agreement with Mercosur does not become an obstacle to the free trade policy. Just as the common external tariff prevents full Chilean participation in that organization, a gradual tariff reduction or one loaded with exemptions can obstruct the access to world markets. Tariffs make national products more expensive and distort the allocation of resources, and when there is preferential treatment for some countries, instead of creating ways for exchange trade is diverted to other countries. Chile must maintain its leadership for eliminating custom barriers and not adjust to less demanding rules.

In this regard, the recognition of the long-standing tariff preferences is a condition that cannot be avoided, because it includes well-known situations after a long association with the ALADI [Latin American Integration Association]. Therefore, it is surprising to find that especially Uruguay is obstructing the renewal of current agreements and does not appreciate the benefits of the Chilean opening in all the fields different than the traditional agricultural production.

The urgency for reaching an agreement with the Mercosur can be the result of the postponements in the negotiations with NAFTA and the European Union. But these postponements have very different causes than the disagreements with the Mercosur. Basically, the postponements are the result of internal political situations in the industrialized countries and the little economic benefit our economy will bring to those common markets. It is not the same thing with Mercosur. Of course, there are reasons of geography, historic and cultural links, degrees of similar developments, advantage in extra-regional negotiations, economic complementation, joint investments, and other benefits of mutual interest.

The experience of the Andean Pact and the excessive expectations created in the regional agreements should be taken into account in the negotiations with Mercosur. There is no doubt that economic growth is the result to a great extent of the unilateral opening of the markets and not to bilateral agreements. The time has come to return to tariff reductions that were interrupted in hopes of reaching multinational agreements which have been postponed indefinitely.

The absence of an agreement with Mercosur is better than an association with restrictions, as the ones proposed so far by the Mercosur members.

Colombia

U.S. Citizen Killed by 'Hired Assassins' in Medellin

PA1512233995 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 2134 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Report by Jose Hernan Echeverry in Medellin; from the "Radio Events" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Metropolitan Police reported that a 34-year-old U.S. citizen was killed by hired assassins in vehicles in the western part of the capital of Antioquia Department. The woman, identified as (Emily Isabel Lain), was intercepted by several armed men as

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she was dropping off her three-year-old daughter at a child care center. The child was not hurt in the attack.

The police said no suspects have been arrested in the incident in the Laureles area. The police said the victim was from New York and had been living in Medellin for the past year. She was married to a a citizen from Antioquia.

Samper: U.S. Diplomat's Remarks 'Serious Meddling'

PA1612203695 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1928 GMT 16 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 16 Dec (EFE) — Colombian President Ernesto Samper today described as "serious meddling" the statements by a U.S. assistant secretary of state that the acquittal of the president by a Congress committee of the charge that he received funds from drug trafficking was not "serious."

Robert Gelbard, assistant secretary for international narcotics, told the CNN network that "it is evident that the investigation was not serious" in reference to a "disqualification ruling" issued by the Accusations Committee of the Colombian Chamber of Representatives, which acquitted Samper of the charge that his campaign was financed with Cali Cartel money.

Early on 14 December this committee decided by a 14 to 1 vote to virtually acquit Samper of having received drug trafficking funds for his 1994 political campaign.

Gelbard believes that if Samper subjected himself to another investigation he would show "the world that he is serious about allowing an absolutely honest effort."

Meanwhile, the Colombian president told the local "NTC" television newscast that the statements by the U.S. assistant secretary of state are "serious."

"One rule [forma] of the relations between two countries is that they should respect each other and abide by the laws and accept rulings, as well as respect the juridical systems of each country," Samper noted.

The Colombian president said that he asked "the foreign minister (Rodrigo Pardo) to obtain the text of such statements."

Samper added that "I myself not only requested compliance with the ruling but also called for a close public monitoring of my conduct."

Meanwhile, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Myles Frechette said yesterday that he would abstain from issuing an opinion in this regard.

"This matter pertains entirely to Colombia," the diplomat said. Frechette added that "he has no comment" about this issue, but he praised and described as "very convincing" the results of the struggle against drug trafficking in this country this year.

Foreign Minister on Statements

PA1812043995 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 18 Dec 95

[From the "AM/PM Newscast"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Colombian Government is not very pleased with U.S. statements on the ruling by the Chamber of Representatives' Accusations Committee. The United States has said it was not serious and Foreign Minister Rodrigo Pardo said the U.S. reaction is not in accordance with good relations.

[Begin recording] [Reporter Hollman Morris] Pardo today announced the Colombian Government's stance on Under Secretary of State Robert S. Gelbard's statements, which, according to Pardo, create an environment of mistrust regarding the fight on drugs by the two countries. Gelbard does not believe in the investigations conducted by the Accusations Committee, as he told CNN.

[Passage omitted]

[Pardo] Indeed, the United States should return to and respect their own policy announced months ago and consider this an internal matter of Colombia and, consequently, move ahead on discussions concerning bilateral matters, but not on the country's internal matters.

[Morris] The statements came precisely when topics of extreme importance to Colombia are under discussion in the United States. One topic concerns next year's certification on drug fighting. The other pertains to the U.S. presidential race between Republicans and Democrats. The topic of drugs can yield political dividends for whichever candidate picks up that flag.

[Pardo] It is part of the political game in the United States and it is leading us to an absurd situation where the country that fights drug trafficking the most is facing difficulties, from a standpoint of certification.

[Morris] For now, it is clearly evident that the U.S. Government only believes in the Prosecutor General's Office. [end recording]

Samper Views U.S. Certification on Anti-Drug Fight

PA1512181595 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with President Ernesto Samper at Narino Palace by Juan Gossain, Francisco Tulande, and

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an unidentified reporter in the station's studios in Santa Fe de Bogota; from the "RCN Radio Events" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Gossain] U.S. Ambassador Myles Frechette has said in an exclusive interview with RCN [Radio Cadena Nacional] that his report to Washington on Colombian actions to fight drugs this year contains points that are much more positive than last year and that one can even expect a full certification for Colombia in March. How does the Colombian Government feel about that?

[Samper] Although we have always considered that the problem of certification, as the U.S. ambassador also told RCN, is a domestic problem in the United States with many domestic policy implications, it is still satisfactory to receive an international certification, from any country, for the impressive results on the war on drugs this country has demonstrated in the last 12 months.

[Gossain] Concerning all these highly [word indistinct] topics in Colombia and in anticipation of how the House of Representatives will vote, you warned in last night's speech that you would veto that bill if the House approved the same article as the Senate. What is your reaction to the fact that the House practically buried the article on illicit enrichment after your address to the nation?

[Samper] I react with satisfaction although [words indistinct] would veto the bill due to the reasons by the interior and justice ministers given at the corresponding debates. It is good for the country for Congress, through the House yesterday and certainly through the Conciliation Committee between the Senate and the House today, to decide not to proceed with this article, which, as was stated repeatedly, had serious implications that were constitutional in nature.

[Reporter] Mr. President, [words indistinct] we saw the strongman, the leader, [words indistinct] when he talked of his family and the cross he had to bear these past months. What can you tell us about this issue?

[Samper] They represent the sentiments of what I experienced these past months. There was the need to maintain a government agenda and programs and to show the country we were advancing, and there was the personal situation and how these problems had to be endured inside the family. I believe yesterday's speech was the most sincere one I delivered in these past months.

[Gossain] Many Colombians had the impression that you were talking to the country with your heart. You were emphatic when you warned, however, that after four and a half months of enduring everything you will henceforth be able to take legal action against anyone who slanders you. At whom is this warning aimed?

[Samper] It is not a threat as some people think. It is that I think the president, as any citizen, and the government have a right to defend ourselves, have a right not to be slandered. We cannot confuse freedom with the freedom to slander. What I said yesterday is that the government will exercise that right to defend the honor of its members, not just that of the president but, rather, of his entire team as well, and to defend the work the government has been conducting. I wish the government's critics would center their analysis on the programs we are carrying out, not praising us, of course, but, rather, questioning, criticizing, and discussing them. What the country needs and wants is for us to stop being [words indistinct].

[Gossain] Is the government prepared to go to court if necessary?

[Samper] Indeed. This is a right that cannot be denied to any citizen. The president's constitutional obligation to defend the honor of all the citizens cannot exclude the president.

[Gossain] Your speech highlights the [words indistinct] legal aspects and all the issues mentioned in the [words indistinct] past case or former adjudication of the [words indistinct] possibilities for a political trial. Would you be willing to go through with such a trial eventually?

[Samper] As I have said previously, the government is willing to hold an open process that is publicly aired. I, personally, am willing to give all the explanations deemed necessary in order for the Accusation Committee's decision to be absolutely open. I believe this will be positive for the country and, of course, the debate or examination can take place anywhere.

[Gossain] Mr. President, the [words indistinct] we perceived from the Accusation Committee's ruling is that if any drug money was filtrated into your campaign, it was done so behind your back. If so, how would you react to any ruling by the Prosecutor's Office or regional judges against officials who were with you in the campaign?

[Samper] Of course, as in the case of the Accusation Committee's ruling, we would comply with the decision issued by the assessment and investigation office. I believe that we have proven something really important during the past months and that our institutions worked effectively, as I was saying to an American journalist yesterday. I told him some people view the past months as a period of rupture, chaos, and confrontation, but the

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president of Colombia views the past months as ones in which we demonstrated despite all the difficulties that there are institutional mechanisms, judges, prosecutors, government, and media that can report freely in the country, something which shows that Colombian democracy is solid.

[Gossain] You said last night that just as you had the opportunity to demonstrate your innocence, others who are facing trials, such as minister or former Minister Botero, could do the same. Do you have total confidence in the former minister's innocence?

[Samper] Of course. What I said was not that they can demonstrate their innocence but, rather, that they should be innocent; that is, we have to ensure that those people have a right to defend themselves, that they have the opportunity, as I did, to prove their innocence.

[Gossain] What can we expect for next year, for example, in the economic and development spheres? What do you think awaits the country? There are some who are predicting there could be an economic crisis in 1996. Do you think this prediction will be so?

[Samper] I would not, let us say, I do not place myself in a radically optimistic position. I believe next year will not be an easy one; it will be a complicated one. The decline in the construction sector will produce unfavorable effects in our growth. The situation with Venezuela and Mexico troubles me. I am concerned about the expansion of contraband we have been experiencing, and we are preparing strong actions against this activity.

I believe, however, these are but clouds in a sky that still shows all the signs sunshine. I hope that we will be able next year to consolidate what we have done this year, that inflation will continue to decrease, our exports will continue to increase, our agriculture sector will continue to recover, and that we will be able to advance in sectors such as infrastructure, which is indispensable.

[Gossain] It seems there is a lot of confidence in the country. For example, the European Investment Bank, which comprises the 15 countries of the community, gave us a $38 million loan yesterday to build a second airstrip in the El Dorado Airport, and they are studying the granting of a new line of credit for the Santa Fe de Bogota-Villavicenio highway. Is this true?

[Samper] Correct, but this is not all. We have also managed to place the most important volume of bonds any Latin American country has ever made in Japan. A loan from a syndicated group of private banks, more than 20 banks, was made to Colombia for the first time since the debt crisis for close to $220 million. The IDB approved a line of credit last week for $500 to be used for the Social Solidarity Network. In a way, Colombia is like the pretty girl in the Latin American economic sphere. We are ranked together with another country that is a model country in this sphere—Chile. [passage omitted on a Christmas novelette written by Samper's aunt]

[Tulande] Mr. President, because politics do not wait, what will happen to the cabinet? There are rumors of profound changes in your government's team.

[Samper] The truth is there are a few ministers who had expressed their desire a few days ago to leave their post. This situation will certainly force us to make certain changes. We will have to examine the scope of the so-called crisis after the congressional session is over.

[Gossain] Between you and me, Mr. President?

[Samper] Between you, me, and the millions of RCN listeners.

[Gossain, laughing] That is why I say: between you, the millions of listeners, and us. Mr. President, will there be about eight or 10 changes in the cabinet?

[Samper] I do not believe there will be so many changes. Among other things, people like to eat ministers alive, but it would not be reasonable either to capriciously remove a minister who is adequately carrying out his duties and who is implementing programs. I believe it would not be acting responsibly to the country to do so, much more so in this government, which emphasizes social issues. Social programs are those that take some time to give results; therefore, I will not fall into the folly of capriciously removing ministers. There should be reasons of a regional and political nature that would justify making such a proposal again.

[Gossain] Would there be other, stronger reasons? It is being said that certain ministers acted lukewarmly during your time of crisis.

[Samper] No. Look, I have no complaints at all against any of the ministers who have been with me during these months; on the contrary, as I pointed out in my speech last night, the permanent cooperation from all the ministers has sustained me in this situation throughout these months. Each one was taking care of his own business and working in his area. Of course, we have established an excellent working relationship with each and every one of them.

[Tulande] Mr. President, the news media have received by fax a letter from former presidential candidate Andres Pastrana. This letter was addressed to you, after you gave your speech last night, and demanded the right to respond to your announcement that you will take legal

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action against those individuals who somewhat question your personal [word indistinct] or the legitimacy of your government.

[Samper] To tell you the truth, I received this letter yesterday and am sending it today to the National Television Commission, which is the constitutionally authorized body to resolve these types of issues.

[Gossain] Does this mean the National Television Commission will make the decision?

[Samper] Yes. This is the body the Constitution has authorized to make decisions in cases of this nature.

[Gossain] Let us go back to what you believe we Colombians should expect for next year regarding the country's climate. In this time of symbols, advertising, and images, would you agree if someone chose the word optimism for 1996?

[Samper] Yes, I would agree, because a president's function, particularly in a country such as Colombia, is to sell optimism. Well, I am addicted to optimism, because I believe one of the Colombian people's greatest ailments is that we are too harsh with ourselves regarding our possibilities for progress and development. It is necessary sometimes to travel abroad to give a better look to Colombia. I think we should overcome this. I believe this country is a very large one having a very important resource: its people. I believe we will succeed with this people and God's help.

[Gossain] Mr. President.... [pauses] Yes, go ahead.

[Reporter] Mr. President, because you have been speaking about people, who do you think is the personality of the year?

[Gossain] General Serrano, Prosecutor General Valdivieso, Dr. Gomez Hurtado, Maria Isabel Urrutia, Santiago Medina, or Heyne Mogollon?

[Samper] The truth is it is very difficult for me, as president, to give an opinion, but I do promise you that once Colombians have chosen RCN's most important personality, I would like to have my saying about this person.

[Gossain] Very well, Mr. President. The people's consultation will be over within a few hours. For instance, may we ask you for your opinion tomorrow about this personality?

[Samper] Exactly. I would be pleased to do so.

Samper Interviewed on Certification

PA1612025095 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Dec 95

[Interview with President Ernesto Samper Pizano, in Narino Palace, by anchors Maria Cristina Uribe and Jorge Alfredo Vargas, in the Inravision studios in Santa Fe de Bogota; from the "Seven O'Clock Newscast" — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Uribe] President, good evening and welcome to the Seven O'Clock Newscast. Was this your first peaceful evening?

[Samper] Well, yes, and I hope it will be followed by another 365 peaceful evenings for all Colombians.

[Vargas] Mr. President, good evening. Do you indeed believe that the problems regarding the accusations against your electoral campaign end here?

[Samper] No, I do not believe they end here. However, I am convinced that this is a clear and truthful chapter that is just beginning in the process in which we, the Prosecutor General's Office, and the Accusations Committee are immersed at my request to fully clarify the events.

[Uribe] Mr. President, you just heard our reporter in the United States report that the U.S. State Department is practically disregarding the ruling the Accusations Committee rendered and that it would rather wait for the ruling of the Prosecutor General's Office. What is your opinion on this, Mr. President? Mr. President? Mr. President, do you want me to repeat the question?

[Samper] Yes, please. I was not listening.

[Uribe] Very well, I will repeat it, Mr. President. I was telling you that our reporter in the United States reported that the State Department is practically and tacitly disregarding the Accusations Committee. What is your opinion on this?

[Samper] Look, the U.S. Government has voiced its neutrality in this issue. The Accusations Committee of the Chamber of Representatives, according to the national Constitution, is the natural judge of the president of the Republic, and it is the one that has rendered the only valid ruling regarding the president's behavior. Of course, this is what we go by in Colombia, the Colombian laws. Regarding the fact that they are awaiting the results of the investigation the Prosecutor General's Office is conducting, the government is also awaiting those results. We were the ones who started the process at the Prosecutor General's Office. We believe that the ruling of the Accusations Commission and the results of

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the investigation the Prosecutor General's Office is conducting must conclusively shed light on the process.

[Uribe] Could it be, Mr. President, that the certification is being [word indistinct] for March 1996 , or do you think you will get it?

[Samper] We are not competing for the certification. The problem with the certification, as the U.S. ambassador to Colombia has explained well, is that it is a domestic policy problem. He has said that the certification could be difficult to obtain due to U.S. domestic problems. So, we will be doing wrong if we interfered in an internal process of another country. What I can assure the international community is that Colombia will continue to fight, by conviction, not by coercion, against this very serious scourge, drug trafficking.

[Vargas] Mr. President, let us finish with a question that you will seriously answer. What is your current opinion of the situation in which former Minister Fernando Botero founds himself?

[Samper] I have the firmest desire and the firmest conviction that, just as I had the opportunity to prove my innocence, he will also prove his innocence during his own process. [passage omitted]

Justice Minister, Others Resign; President Reacts

PA1612192395 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 16 Dec 95

[From the "Cripton" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Justice Minister Nestor Humberto Martinez Neira, who had been part of the cabinet since the start of the government of President Samper, has resigned.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] Moments ago, here in Zipaquira, President Ernesto Samper Pizano regretted the resignation of Justice Minister Martinez. The ministers of labor and foreign trade had already resigned.

In his visit to the Salt Cathedral of Zipaquira, the head of state refused to reveal the names of his new cabinet, which will be reshuffled. He preferred to comment on the resignation of his justice minister and to keep his list of new collaborators secret to avoid bringing bad luck:

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Did the justice minister's resignation catch you by surprise?

[Samper] No, we had a lengthy conversation yesterday. He gave me personal and professional reasons that I consider to be absolutely respectable. I regret this very much because Martinez was an excellent minister. He, however, will leave the groundwork that will be very important for the consolidation of the government's criminal policy.

[Reporter] When will we know who is in the new cabinet? You said there is no crisis, that there will be an adjustment of the cabinet.

[Samper] You will know when the time comes. [laughs] Let us wait until certain things materialize between now and Monday. You will certainly see white smoke next week. [end recording]

[Station announcer Hernan Castrillon] Concerning his resignation, the Cripton newscast has the most recent statements by Dr. Nestor Humberto Martinez Neira.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] Minister Martinez confirmed that his resignation is not due to differences with President Ernesto Samper Pizano over the well-known narco-rider.

[Martinez] Not at all. In a very straightforward manner, on behalf of the government and before the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives, I said that that initiative was unadvisable and unconstitutional, and I always did so with the authorization of the president of the Republic. For the time being I hope to enjoy a deserved break with my family. [end recording]

'Sources' on New Ministers

PA1612195195 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 16 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Not only has the justice minister left. The reshuffle of President Samper's cabinet is coming:

[Unidentified reporter] The Cripton newscast has learned from sources close to Narino Palace that the following ministers will continue to accompany President Ernesto Samper: Interior Minister Horacio Serpa, Finance Minister Guillermo Perry, Foreign Minister Rodrigo Pardo, Health Minister Augusto Galan, Defense Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra, and Transportation Minister Juan Gomez Martinez. Current Education Minister Maria Emma Mejia would become the new environment minister.

The following will leave: Foreign Trade Minister Daniel Mazuera, Labor Minister Maria Sol Navia, Justice Minister Nestor Humberto Martinez, Communications Minister Armando Benedetti, and Mines and Energy Rodrigo Villamizar.

The new members of Samper's cabinet will be: Gabriel Melo Guevera as development minister and Sabas

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Pretelt de la Vega as foreign trade minister. Ramiro Bejarano or Carlos Medellin, the current palace legal adviser, could become the new justice minister. Three names are being juggled for the post of communications minister: Juan Manuel Turbay, Julio Molano, and Juan Fernando Cristo. Henry Edel could become the new agriculture minister.

There will also be changes at 10 embassies and new Colombian Government representatives to France and Austria that are currently vacant will be appointed.

Further Reaction to Accusations Committee Ruling

Samper Admits Political Crisis

PA1612034795 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2249 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 15 Dec (EFE) — Colombian President Ernesto Samper, acquitted on Wednesday by a parliamentarian commission that investigated the reported infiltration of drug-trafficking money into his election campaign, said today that "there is a crisis" in the country, but that it is "political, not institutional."

Samper told some foreign correspondents that during this semester, when a narco-scandal was sparked by the infiltration of Cali mob money into the 1994 electoral campaign, his credibility as head of state was not affected and the opinion polls confirm it. "I think the serious part of the crisis, which had to do with the president's image, is over. Of course, an investigation of aspects related to the campaign over other implications must now follow," he said.

On Wednesday, the Chamber of Representatives' Accusations Committee, which had been investigating Samper for four months, ruled that there were no merits to open a criminal trial against him. Samper asked that the disposition forbidding the revelation of the proceedings be lifted so the public can hear of the evidence.

Samper, who said on Thursday over a radio and television network that he will not hesitate to use "every legal means" at his disposal to combat those who insist on trying to "destabilize" his government, denied that this assertion means a government "onslaught" against his opponents. "Every citizen is entitled to defend his honor. At no time does the Constitution state that everyone has this right except the president of the Republic," Samper told EFE. He added: "The president, as any other citizen, has the right to defend his honor and that of his family."

Asked whether he admits that Cali mob money infiltrated his campaign, as his former electoral treasurer Santiago Medina, who was captured on 26 July, reported, Samper said it was he who asked for the intervention of the Prosecutor General's Office when he learned of the probable infiltration. He added that he has been endorsing the investigation ever since.

Samper played down a probable discontent in the United States over his acquittal and said that U.S. Ambassador Miles Frechette had congratulated him on Thursday over the telephone for the committee's decision.

Referring to the U.S. Government's annual certification over the antidrug struggle, a certification that conditions U.S. economic aid, Samper said: "Apart from this decision, Colombia will continue to wage its antidrug struggle all by itself."

Finally, he said: "I challenge any person in the United States to show better results in the fight against drugs than those we have attained in the past few years."

Samper on Committee Decision

PA1712004995 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2325 GMT 15 Dec 95

[Interview with President Ernesto Samper in Santa Fe de Bogota by Telemundo correspondent Raul Peimbert via satellite link from Miami; date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Peimbert] Yesterday, the Congress Accusations Commission momentarily acquitted you from the drug trafficking money scandal in your campaign. How will this affect your presidential image, after undoubtedly, one of the most severe crises in your country?

[Samper] I believe the executive and government's credibility were restored. We are very satisfied with this decision, which also coincides with my prediction. This was a long and arduous job.

I, myself requested this investigation and accounted the version that disposed of the accusations, damages, offenses, and injuries presented by the suspects. These arguments were only trying to involve the president. We are pleased that this was the end of the matter.

[Peimbert] Mr. President, you were not aware of the introduction of that money in your campaign?

[Samper] I was not only unaware of that fact, but up until now, the organizations carrying out investigations have not issued definite conclusions upon the source, magnitude, or personal responsibilities for that money in the campaign.

[Peimbert] There is a recurrent question. We wonder how could a political leader at your level, be unaware of the activities your closest aids carried out?

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[Samper] Well, the truth is that this campaign was drawn in such a way for the candidate to have a total free range of action. The administrative and political areas were handled independently and in a responsible way. Actually, because we knew of this possible risk, we established strict ethical controls. We did not discard the possibility that one of these controls could be disobeyed. Nevertheless, we are awaiting conclusions from the investigating organizations in order to speak of conclusive facts.

[Peimbert] There is another aspect we would like to tackle in this interview. Mr. President why did a close collaborator like Santiago Medina who was your campaign treasurer, could launch such accusations against your campaign?

[Samper] This is something we are wondering ourselves. In fact, these accusations were disqualified and discredited during the process presented before the Accusations Committee. We hope this will facilitate a 180 degree turn in the course of the present investigation.

[Peimbert] Normally, after this type of investigations, there is always talk of a witch hunt. In this case, Mr. President, would there be any kind of reprisals against politicians who tried to take advantage of you during this crisis?

[Samper] No, there will be no reprisals from my part. What I have pointed out very clearly is that I want to promote reconciliation with all those who in any way tackled this issue, which as you can imagine is very delicate in Colombia.

I have also pointed out that those who during these months have tried or are trying to take advantage of the situation to destabilize democracy will be punished with the full force of the law, an action that is endorsed by the entire Colombian society.

[Peimbert] We know that drug trafficking has infiltrated into important government positions not only in Colombia, but in various Latin American countries. Do you think that your political adversaries are cleared from this type of accusations?

[Samper] Well, I believe no one in Colombia can cast the first stone in this matter. In fact, in the past months I have seen many tearing their stained garments, but I accept this as a reality we have to face.

It would be useless to say that the drug-trafficking money has not influenced the various everyday activities in Colombia. What we need to do is face this challenge and put an end to this infiltration. This will only be possible once we begin to eradicate this evil from society, as the government has done by dismantling the powerful drug organizations. Furthermore, it will be possible when society develops social controls to avoid this type of infiltration.

[Peimbert] Mr. President, this narco-scandal ended the political career of many important figures. What do you think will be the future of former Defense Minister Jose Fernando Botero?

[Samper] I am sure Mr. Botero will demonstrate his innocence in this process, as I did myself. He is a person of a recognized personal, and professional solvency. Nobody here understands how a person who puts the main cartel leaders to prison could have any type of involvement with them. I am sure that if something happened during the campaign, which the investigation is trying to establish, it was without Botero's knowledge, as I already mentioned in my own case.

[Peimbert] Mr. President, the media agrees that you have attained victory with the rejection of a bill aimed at voiding illegal enrichment as a criminal activity. What is your opinion on the subject?

[Samper] Yes, in fact, it was a very hard battle, but in Colombia we are used to intercepting these blows against the legal system. Although this decision has triggered a controversy in Congress, I would like to add that it was the Congress itself, which on behalf of the government, explained how the approval of this article could generate a negative situation, and decided to reject it. This rejection demonstrated the existence of controls in Colombia to hinder the cartels from having politico-legal advantages.

[Peimbert] Nevertheless, Mr. President, Washington has recently hinted displeasure toward Colombia's achievements in the fight against drugs. Do you think, Colombia merits the so-called certification?

[Samper] We have concluded that the certification is a U.S. internal problem. No country, and I say this with conviction, can demonstrate the number of achievements my governn has shown during the past year in regard to the fight against drug trafficking.

We have dismantled powerful criminal organizations; we have destroyed more than 50 percent of the hectares with illegal crops; we have militarized our airports; we have approved the most strict regulations known in the world to control money laundering. For this reason, the decision of the certification is a problem of the U.S. authorities. Colombia will continue to fight drug trafficking with or without the certification, in virtue of its conviction and not coercion. At the same time we ask the world community to do their share, because we cannot handle the international problem all

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by ourselves. If the consumption of drugs continue, then the production will continue.

[Peimbert] Obviously, Mr. President, the political crisis brought consequences to the Colombian economy: in investments, as well as in the peso speedy devaluation. There is a key word in this problem, it is trust. What do you plan to do in order to recover foreign investor's trust?

[Samper] I do not believe there is much I need to do, because I disagree with your conclusion. Colombia has received significant evidence of foreign investor's trust during the last 15 days. Colombia's condition was placed at (dimui) rating, which is the highest level of investment risk. We acquired the first loan of voluntary syndication [sindicacion voluntaria] after the foreign debt crisis for more than $230 million that involved more than 20 international private banks. The outcome, and I say it from the point of view of an economist, is that Colombia's economy was not affected by the crisis.

[Peimbert] Mr. President, there have been rumors of a matrimony between Colombian politicians and the so-called drug capos for more than two decades. There are also rumors that your party, the Liberal, has been the one which received the most benefits from illegal money. Do you agree with this statements?

[Samper] Of course, I disagree. I believe that the fact of trying to connect all relations of the drug-trafficking money with a party is a political ruse, which I would have to disregard. I accept as president and as Colombian that the drug-trafficking money has been present in many everyday activities, even in the political scene. Many institution officials for tolerance, fear, conviction, or ambition could have surrendered to this trap of easy money. This is one thing, but we cannot ignore Colombia's struggle, first of all the Liberal Party's (PL). Many members of the PL have died in the struggle against terrorism promoted by drug trafficking. People we should mention, like Luis Carlos Galan, Rodrigo Lara, or many other Liberal candidates who have given their lives in this struggle. I believe it is an unfair belief.

[Peimbert] The last question, Mr. President. What future do you forecast in regard to this serious drug-trafficking problem, which has infiltrated in many important levels of the government?

[Samper] We in Colombia are extremely optimistic people. This is a country with a dynamic way of life. We witness crisis that come and go in a few hours. These could worry some people, but for me, as president, it is a motivator. What we want to do and what we will continue to do is to guide that motivation to benefit the majority of Colombians.

[Peimbert] Are you worried about your security?

[Samper] Well, as you know I was the victim of an attack that almost killed me. God gave me a second opportunity. I do not believe I deserve a third opportunity, but I do not worry about that. I believe what is important is to know how to handle fear and not to be afraid. I learned long ago how to handle fear.

[Peimbert] Mr. President, thank you very much for allowing this interview.

Samper Willing To Face Debate

PA1612043295 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0230 GMT 16 Dec 95

[Interview with President Ernesto Samper by Ernesto McCausland and an unidentified reporter in Santa Fe de Bogota; from the "QAP News" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ernesto Samper reiterated tonight that the Accusation Committee's decision shows his innocence and that he will undergo a political debate.

[McCausland] Mr. President, this has been a very long year for you. Tell me, in all sincerity, did you at any time consider resigning?

[Samper] To tell you the truth, no. I believe that when we... [pauses] presidents will not even consider resigning when people believe they will.

[Reporter] If new evidence arises and the Prosecutor General's Office issues a new indictment, which it can do, what would you do, Mr. President.

[Samper] If tomorrow it is discovered that I committed another crime, or that I killed someone, or that I stole a car, I am subject to be investigated by the Accusations Committee.

[McCausland] Are you worried about the low credibility that the Accusations Committee that investigated you has among Colombians? A survey showed that 72 percent of the people do not trust the committee.

[Samper] I think this is a Byzantine discussion, because the reality is that I am innocent.

[Reporter] Would you go through a political debate, as proposed some time ago?

[Samper] I proposed it. I have no problem providing clarity to the process that has just ended and letting all the details be known.

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[McCausland] In a political debate, however, we will constantly be hearing charges against you that the campaign was contaminated even if you did not know it.

[Samper] Well, that is what the debate is for. There will be arguments one way or the other.

[Reporter] Last night during your address to the nation you said that if someone again doubted your innocence or honorability, you would adopt the necessary measures. What are thouse measures?

[Samper] Legal measures. The same ones I am entitled to by law, the same as you or any other citizen. If someone tries to slander me, I will reply.

[McCausland] Someone like who, for example, Mr. President?

[Samper] No, I was talking abstractly. What happens is that there has been much abuse in four months...

[Reporter, interrupting] There is much being said about your meeting with Fernando Botero. It is said that it was tense, and so on. Can you tell us what really happened in that meeting?

[Samper] For me, personally, the meeting was very satisfactory, as I had the opportunity to talk again to a friend with whom I had not talked for several months.

[McCausland] You are not worried that he could turn against you, like Santiago Medina, another friend, did?

[Samper] No, I did not have the same kind of friendship with Medina as I have had with Fernando Botero, with whom I have been friends for many years. I am not worried at all. I believe it worries some people who would like to see a confrontation between us, but they will not get their way. Look, he will be exempted of charges. The thing is that the judicial mechanisms in his case are different from the ones used with the president of the Republic. I am sure, however, that if he were in the same process with me, or if the Accusations Committee investigated him, he would be declared free of charges.

Chamber Debates, Defeats 'Narco-Rider' Initiative

PA1612041795 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Dec 95

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast;" passages within quotation marks recorded; speakers identified by caption]

[FBIS Translated Text] During the heated debate at the Chamber of Representatives where the famous narco-rider was revived and then defeated, all sorts of things occurred, from fights to public declarations of admiration.

The initiative that sought to stop judicial actions against illegal enrichment and front men began to be buried when a mistake in the wording was found in the document sent by the Senate and when no one in the Chamber initially backed the rider. Nevertheless, the reaction of those who wanted a debate was not long in coming.

[Representative Carlos Alonso Lucio] "I am proposing not only that the discussion be reopened but that we declare that it was never closed. There has not been any discussion."

A vote was taken to reopen the debate and the narco-article seemed to have been revived. Nevertheless, opinions against it were rapidly expressed.

[Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdivieso] "The Colombians' opinion of this body will in some way be really based on the decision you will make this evening."

The debate continued until there was a strong exchange between Representative Ingrid Betancur and Interior Minister Horacio Serpa over the representative's statement that the narco-article would favor the interests of former Minister Botero Zea.

[Betancur] "You have no right to come here to insult and slander us simply because you do not agree with what we are stating. I ask you for a little respect Mr. Minister"

The minister replied by not giving this much importance.

[Serpa] "I greatly respect you, distinguished representative. I greatly admire you."

Despite the fear of the government and the Prosecutor General's Office, the arguments were overwhelming, and the narco-rider was unamiously defeated. [video shows representatives cheering, applauding]

Ecuador

Minister: Arms Purchase 'Should Not Affect' Peace

PY1612025095 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Galo Leoro Franco today said that Ecuador's purchase of four war aircraft should not affect the peace process with Peru.

Leoro Franco said that the order to purchase the four Israeli Kafir fighter bombers was issued before

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the beginning of the armed conflict between Ecuador and Peru early this year. The minister said: I do not think the purchase may, by any means, affect relations between Ecuador and Peru. These aircraft were purchased to replace four Kafir aircraft that suffered accidents between 1988 and 1989, and one that is out of service because it is in a poor state. The purchase is not conceived nor does it fall within the framework of an arms race.

Leoro Franco said Ecuador is willing to give Peru a list of the weapons acquired recently if the Lima government follows suit. He added that Ecuador hopes to assess the subject of the weapons purchased by the two countries during his meeting with Peruvian Foreign Minister Francisco Tudela in January during a meeting to be held in Lima.

Supreme Court Indicts Comptroller General

PY1512180995 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0231 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Quito, 14 Dec (EFE) — Supreme Court [CSJ] President Carlos Solorzano today ordered the indictment of Comptroller General Juan Carlos Faidutti in the case of the discretionary funds allocated to the vice presidency, which is currently under court investigation.

CSJ spokesmen have informed EFE that in a ruling issued today, Solorzano orders "the indictment of the comptroller general without his arrest," in view of the request made by Attorney General Fernando Casares.

Casares today requested that Faidutti be prosecuted in the case of discretionary funds on the grounds that he "was too simplistic in his study" of the records of these expenses and because "serious negligence has been committed," since the nature of the expenses was not properly examined.

The CSJ is conducting a penal case against former Vice President Alberto Dahik, who has fled to Costa Rica, for the alleged embezzlement of discretionary funds allocated to the vice presidency. These funds were deposited in current accounts opened in a private bank instead of the Central Bank, as is established in the law.

Faidutti also claimed he had no knowledge that these funds were deposited in private accounts, although Dahik recently sent from Costa Rica records of these accounts with Faidutti's signature.

Solorzano issued the ruling after Vice Presidential Secretary Luis Rueda testified before him this afternoon, stating that he had received a bonus derived from the discreteionary funds and that he was told that the comptroller general had been informed about it.

The ruling against Faidutti also comes after much speculation about an eventual impeachment of President Sixto Duran-Ballen.

Such a possibility has not been rejected by Attorney General Fernando Casares, who today said in an interview that "I reject no possibilities, but I do not want to engage in any speculation." He added that "the president's conduct is currently being questioned."

Casares added: "I have no intention of making things more difficult for the president, but the facts are there and they are all linked."

To Stand Trial in Dahik Case

PY1612025995 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comptroller General Juan Carlos Faidutti said that he will stand the penal trial ordered by the Supreme Court of Justice and said that he does not know where the allegedly embezzled public funds are deposited.

Faidutti told journalists: If my arrest is ordered I would have to go, but not to Miami — I do not have the funds to do so because I have never administered any discretionary funds.

Faidutti said he could see the Court decision coming. There was a tremendous coincidence between former Vice President Alberto Dahik's reports and the attorney general's statements. I was mentally prepared for this, he said.

Attorney General Fernando Casares has requested the Supreme Court to include Faidutti in the trial because he believes there is enough evidence to do so.

The comptroller was involved in the investigations against Dahik because he was the only person authorized by law to check how the discretionary funds, allegedly misused by Dahik, were spent.

Faidutti repeated that he never knew that the former vice president kept the discretionary funds in private bank accounts.

Faidutti did not dismiss the possibility of having been deceived regarding the vice presidency's accounts, but added that this will be confirmed by the Supreme Court of Justice.

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President Duran-Ballen Addresses Nation

PY1512171595 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 0231 GMT 14 Dec 95

[Address to the nation by President Sixto Duran-Ballen — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Fellow countrymen: With great amazement and concern, the country is witnessing and judging one of the most difficult episodes of its political life. The months following the war [with Peru] have been marked by accusations, political interests, and, what is more serious still, calumnies.

The political climate has reached intolerable levels of violence and aggressiveness. Fellow countrymen, it is not possible that anybody can press charges before a court based on interpretations and presumptions, without thinking about the serious — extremely serious — consequences they will have for the country.

Tonight, in my capacity as constitutional president of the Republic and also as an Ecuadoran citizen — like any one of you fellow countrymen who have the full right to defend your name, your honor, and that of your family — I want to express my firm, categorical, determined rejection of these statements, and assert that they are not valid.

Public servants, legislators, private individuals have attacked the president of the Republic. These attacks culminated with those made by former Banks Superintendent Jose Iturralde Arteaga. Undoubtedly, it would be absurd to try to say that the president of the Republic, in view of the crisis that was unleashed, did not get in contact with competent authorities such as the banks superintendent. To be precise, I kept abreast of and informed about the developments, as is only natural. But aside from that, the scandal that Iturralde has tried to create [words indistinct] Iturralde has not stated the truth. His charges, because I did not include him on the list of candidates for the position of banks superintendent to be elected by Congress, are perverse and ill-intentioned. All he seeks is to stain a life — my life — that is characterized by the responsibility and honesty with which I have served my country. As proof of my actions, I offer you my more than 40 years of service to the community. My expression of indignation and rejection is also an expression of protest. It is unacceptable that in Ecuador personal resentment leads to these types of acts that, far from contributing to clarifying actions that are being investigated, only confuse the people and contribute to creating an unhealthy climate full of hatred, doubts, and unrest.

Remember fellow countrymen, remember, that yesterday, at the beginning of his declarations Iturralde said, quote, in my opinion it could be interpreted, unquote. Please allow me to repeat it: in my opinion it could be interpreted. And this is precisely what he has done: He has interpreted, come to conclusions, and allowed himself to be carried away by his imagination. Why did I not include him on the list of candidates? Because he was not fit for such a delicate job. First, when he was national banks intendent, and later, when he was superintendent of banks that were subject to intervention [bancos encargados], it was Jose Iturralde Arteaga's responsibility to approve the authorization for the creation of new banks.

I will mention one single case: the authorization request submitted by the Megabanco Inc., which was favorably acknowledged by Iturralde despite — and listen to this — despite the negative reports submitted to him by his own technical department and by the national government's economic authorities pointing out a series of omissions and irregularities in the authorization granted to the new banking enterprise. An example that suffices well enough is the fact that the (?Intermin) financial enterprise was one of the shareholders of Megabanco Inc. Fellow citizens, this financial enterprise closed down yesterday, harming hundreds of citizens. This could have been avoided had the actions recommended by its own experts [words indistinct].

There are conclusions to this request. Allow me to read just two of the conclusions: the declaration of assets of the promoters do not agree with the statements and income tax payments for the past three years. The conclusion also says: the management capabilities of (?Mill Holding Inc.), which is the majority shareholder of Megabanco Inc., shows weakness in the management of one of its branches, the (?Intermin) financial organization, which showed a deficit over the past few months in its technical assets. Based on this report an authorization was granted, it was granted with a negative report by the manager of the Central Bank. Here it is. It says: I hereby express my negative vote. With the negative vote of (Mauro Vitriago Dun), member of the Central Bank Executive Board. It says here: My vote is no.

In face of this irregular and suspicious process late last September, I ordered a thorough investigation of this case, and ordered that the authorization for the opening of the new bank not be granted. Taking into account only this event, in no way would I include Iturralde among the three candidates for superintendent of banks. The election of the superintendent was not based, as he said, on political deals but on our intention to propose for this position a person who has the technical knowledge, and above all, the necessary moral values to hold such an important position.

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Faced with this situation, the time has come tonight to say enough, to end the falsehood and lies. Iturralde will be tried in a criminal court for making absurd accusations against me. I will act in the same way with all those who seek to hurt my prestige, my honor, and that of my family.

My tolerance should not be understood as a weakness. From now on I will defend my honor with determination. I should also mention that I never tried to obstruct judicial proceedings. Proof of this can be seen in the many inspections by the Supreme Court president at the vaults of the Central Bank, and the lifting of the decree that allowed the Court of Constitutional Guarantees to openly and publicly study the contents of the microfilms.

Let me reiterate that I will maintain that position; I do not cover up and will not cover up for anybody. To this effect, I reiterate what I conveyed today to the Supreme Court president, that I knew nothing about the microfilms of the discretionary funds of the vice presidency.

In relation to other repeated charges made by various people, about the creditors of the (Flores), (Bien) and Irandina companies — that they reportedly received payments through checks on state accounts — let me say that it is a serious charge, that some of the payments were delivered by members of my family.

Fellow citizens: Tonight I intend to be categorically clear. Not one creditor of (Flores), (Bien), or Irandina have ever received a single penny from discretionary funds.

Moreover, I have asked the National Financing Corporation [CFN] and the Superintendency of Companies to make public the documents that certify this.

The CFN has already responded to my request. It shows the last payments made by the company [not further identified] were made on 20 June and 8 July 1994. Thus, the payments were made prior to the date the company owners left the country, that is 18 July 1994.

No cash payments were made as of 18 July. The only payments made were those resulting from the income obtained from the auctions of company equipment, properties, apartments, etc.

Fellow citizens:

This means, therefore, no payment was ever received, I repeat, no payment was ever received from either private or public funds. Consequently, no public funds have been used and no payments have been made by members of my family.

Moreover, in the case of the Irandina financial company, the trustee informed the Superintendency of Companies that there have been no accounting transactions, no credits or debits have been recorded, since 18 July 1994.

I have here with me the CFN certificate indicating that two payments were made prior to 18 July: the first was made on 20 June to the amount of $11,000 from a bank account in Panama; and a second payment was made on 8 July for $56 [figure as heard] in cash.

Furthermore, this certificate shows the sole income obtained after 18 July resulted from the auctions of apartments CF8 and CF94 in the Altos del Mar building in the Casablanca condominium, Atacama canton, Esmeralda province; a commercial property, LC No. 250, in the Unicentro 2 building; apartment No. 2 and parking place No. D11 and D12, and storage place No. B2, in the El Barranco building; and of a lot in (?Llano Chico).

This is the only income since 18 July, the date on which the Andacarreno family left the country.

Therefore, no payments were received from discretionary funds or from private parties. That is the truth. These are public documents and (words indistinct) them at any time.

Fellow Ecuadorans:

I hereby wish to reassert my intention, my willingness, and my interest to assist the courts in fulfilling their duty but with absolute independence and without pressure so that it may promptly establish the absolute truth.

The president has nothing to hide. He behaves in a completely honest and proper manner. (?His main concern) has always been the wellbeing of the nation. I have clearly shown this in all government activities I have undertaken.

In all modesty, I can assert that I have dedicated my life to serve the fatherland and it is also true that many a times this service has brought me pain and bitterness, like the ones I am currently experiencing.

In view of this, I ask you to end this campaign of mutual aggression and destruction which causes us irreparable damage.

I plan to decisively face those political actions which seek to undermine the democratic transition process. I will be in office until the very last moment of my constitutional term (?implementing) the economic reform and the reactivation program. The modernization program of my administration is a public undertaking that has already been implemented nationwide.

My administration will hand over power to the next president who will be democratically elected by the

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Ecuadoran people. We will not yield, therefore, to absurd proposals that have other objectives.

Fellow Ecuadorans:

I do not believe any group is interested in forcing the administration to interrupt its constitutional term. Who would be interested in keeping the Ecuadoran people from exercising their legitimate right to elect their government leaders?

Once again I reassert to economic groups that the economic program will continue unchanged, that we will continue to strive to improve economic indicators which have resulted in the curbing of the inflation rate to record levels and the improvement of salary levels, which have eased the severe crisis we have experienced over the past few years.

Fellow citizens:

I call on you to meditate and I urge you to act in a mature manner so that we may recover the atmosphere of respect, harmony, and peace that is required so that we may work, produce, and develop. Moreover, we [words indistinct] the courts fulfill its duty.

Good evening fellow Ecuadorans.

Shots Fired at Health Minister's Car

PY1812115195 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0054 GMT 17 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Quito, 17 Dec (EFE) — Four unidentified individuals today fired shots at the car of Health Minister Alfredo Palacio. The minister, who was unhurt, rejected any possible political motives for the attack.

The incident occurred in Guayaquil when Palacio's car was parked outside his residence, where he was at the time. Palacio expressed surprise over the incident.

After stating that he "has always been the promoter of change and this generates controversy," Palacio said: "I have many friends because I am a physician who believes in peace."

He added that the controversies that surround the changes he promotes "affect intellectual people who believe in peace, not in political chicanery."

The Ecuadoran police have not given details about the attack which was perpetrated about noon today.

Stock Exchange Closed for Fourth Consecutive Day

PY1512203995 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 1700 GMT 15 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ecuadoran stock exchange market was closed for the fourth consecutive day today in view of uncertainty generated by recent charges raised against President Sixto Duran-Ballen for covering up corruption cases.

(Conti Valores) Company Agent Alvaro Lopez, said the prevailing political nervousness and the problems affecting broker firms [casas de valores] undermine stock exchange market activities. He added that the situation tends to improve.

The director of the Quito Stock Exchange said his institution will penalize broker firms that are managed by a board of trustees if it is established that irregularities have occurred.

Quito Stock Exchange Director Arturo Quiroz said: Four broker firms have been placed under trusteeship. If studies by the Stock Exchange determine that third parties have been harmed, if money has been embezzled, or if funds have been mishandling, we will penalize them.

Peru

Fujimori Against U.S. Authorizing Planes for Ecuador

PA1612230295 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1715 GMT 16 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lima, 16 Dec (EFE) — Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori said that the United States would lose credibility if it authorizes the sale of Israeli war planes, equipped with U.S. motors, to Ecuador.

Fujimori made this statement in the northern Trujillo city and the local press published it today. He stated that the United States, as a guarantor of the 1942 Rio de Janeiro Protocol that established the Peruvian-Ecuadoran limits and guarantor of the peace process between the two Andean nations, is obliged to contribute to the peace-keeping efforts in the area. [passage omitted]

"The guarantor countries are obliged to contribute to the keeping of peace and that is why I am sure the United States will not mediatize its position by authorizing the sale of planes to Ecuador," the Ecuadoran president underscored.

He added that the United States would lose credibility if it authorizes the sale of those planes to Ecuador.

"Can you imagine the United States, a country that has furthered peace in the former Yugoslavia, selling weapons to one of the three conflicting parties at this time. It would not be logical. This is case is somewhat similar," Fujimori told reporters.

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He added that the Peruvian Government had contacted the U.S. Administration to stop the sale of Israeli planes to Ecuador.

Fujimori considered, however, that Peru and Ecuador are free to buy weapons authorized by law and international treaties.

He asserted that in Peru's case, as he had stated during and after the armed conflict at the beginning of the year, the country does not need to buy weapons. This commentary referred to an official Ecuadoran report that stated that Peru was furthering actions to purchase war materiel in Russia and China. [rest of item not received]

More on Fujimori's Comments

PY1612023395 Lima America Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 16 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The United States, in its capacity as guarantor of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol, cannot allow Ecuador to purchase Kafir war aircraft.

This was stated categorically by President Alberto Fujimori, referring to the authorization that the U.S. Government must grant to purchase the mentioned aircraft.

[Begin Fujimori recording] The guarantor countries must contribute to maintaining peace. Peru and Ecuador have signed the Rio de Janeiro Peace and Friendship Protocol. Therefore, I am sure the United States, in its capacity as guarantor country, will safeguard that objective. The United States cannot overlook its role as guarantor country by authorizing the sale of weapons to Ecuador. Otherwise, it will lose credibility as a guarantor country.

Just imagine if the United States were to sell weapons to one of the three territories of the former Yugoslavia, to one of three sectors of the former Yugoslavia. It would not be logical. This is a similar case. We are going through a peace process, negotiations. Therefore, I do not think any of the guarantor countries should sell weapons either to Peru or Ecuador. Each country can purchase those weapons, I mean those weapons that are internationally authorized, from any other country.

[Unidentified reporter] Precisely, the Ecuadoran [word indistinct] national communications of Ecuador asserted that Peru is negotiating the purchase of eight aircraft and is also [words indistinct] with Chile [words indistinct].

[Fujimori] I repeat what I have said before, during, and after the conflict. Peru does not need to purchase weapons. What we are doing is modernizing, updating, just maintaining the balance. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Bomb Found in Congress Building Deactivated

PY1612031995 Lima America Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 16 Dec 95

[Speaker identified by screen caption]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A home-made bomb was found this morning in the ceiling of the third floor of the Congress building. The packet was located a few meters away from the glass dome over the session hall. Therefore, its explosion would have seriously injured the legislators gathered there.

The immediate intervention of the National Police bomb brigade prevented the explosion.

At approximately 0900 security agents stationed in Congress detected a small brown paper envelope in the ceiling of the third floor of the Congress building. The envelope was located on top of the air conditioning system and a few meters away from the glass dome of the former Chamber of Deputies where the plenary sessions are held.

Members of the National Police Bomb Disposal Squad, Udex, appeared on the scene immediately. After reviewing the package, they found a home-made plastic bomb inside the tin-foil layer of the envelope.

The Udex agents took the bomb to the Faustino Sanchez Carrion Square, behind the Congress building, where they dismantled it. [passage omitted]

According to the police report, the bomb consisted of a percussion cap and some dynamite sticks taken from a military bomb, a detonating cord, one battery, one clothes peg, and plastic material with a safety string. This rudimentary bomb would have had disastrous consequences had it detonated.

The discovery and defusing of the bomb found on the third floor of the Congress building coincided with the last session of the first ordinary congressional period of this year.

Had the bomb detonated in the midst of today's session, the huge dome located on top of the chamber would have collapsed on top of the legislators. It would have also caused other considerable damage. After a few minutes the bomb was taken to one of the Congress parking lots next to Bolivar Square.

In the midst of great secrecy, policemen coordinated the transportation of the bomb that was previously placed inside a black metal box. The device was taken in a Udex vehicle to the National Police laboratory to be analyzed. [passage omitted]

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[Begin recording] [Congress Chairman Martha Chavez] The necessary enquiries are being carried out. All the necessary measures will be taken. I want to inform you that we have requested, for example, that four light tanks be placed, one on each side of the Congress building, as is done around other institutions, to protect us. We are adopting measures which are obviously confidential, to tackle this issue. I think we should remain calm but also be aware that we are all part of this game. We must cooperate and hope that nothing negative ever happens.

[Unidentified reporter] Is this why a Dincote [National Counterterrorism Directorate] delegation visited Congress today?

[Chaves] Dincote personnel came to do what was necessary and they obviously have to maintain the necessary secrecy. [end recording]

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